

## Chapter V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present paper intends to explore what factors English teachers of the senior high schools in greater Taipei area take into consideration in selecting textbooks, with particular focus on the comparison of differences between public and private schools, urban and rural schools, and senior and young teachers. This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on discussing the research questions of the present study presented in Chapter One, and the second section deals with recommendations of the research followed by limitations and suggestions for future studies.

#### 5.1 Discussion of the Findings

The discussion of the six research questions is primarily based on the findings of the questionnaires (including factors' ranking and T-test analysis<sup>1</sup>), and the interviews with the teachers and textbook compilers. Moreover, the relevant findings such as the T-test significance and the data collected from the interviews are revealed serving as evidence to support the discussion. In the discussion of the differences

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<sup>1</sup> Tables in this chapter not only list respectively the top five factors of each contrastive variables but also display some other factors with remarkable differences shown in shaded background, a few of which even reach different degrees of T-test significance.

between school teachers of public and private, urban and rural, the external factors,

basically, are explored initially, followed by internal factors, and T-test analysis.

However, if several factors are related to one specific reason, those factors will be

discussed concurrently despite external or internal factors.

**1. What factors are senior high school English teachers generally concerned about in selecting EFL textbooks? And what are the priorities of these influencing factors?**

**Table 5.1.1 A**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (total teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
4	Publishers' reputation
5	Salespersons' service

**Table 5.1.1 B**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (total teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Contents include a variety of themes and genres.
4	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
5	The textbook provides an intact package such as workbooks or teacher's manual.

In terms of external factors shown in Table 5.1.1 A, it is not surprising to find that most of the teachers place students' proficiency and learning needs as the top priority and teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method as the third priority. Since both teachers and students are the core users of the textbook (Macian, 1986), the factors closely related to them certainly tend to be highly emphasized.

Students, who acquire the knowledge from the textbook, are very sensitive to the difficulty level of the textbook. A textbook with many complicated grammatical structures may discourage low-proficient students. Likewise, a simple textbook without any challenges may bore high-proficient ones. On the other hand, if a textbook is not able to meet students' learning needs, it can hardly appeal to them. Thus, when selecting such a student-centered pedagogical material, it is inevitable for teachers to take students' English proficiency and learning needs into considerable account.

After students' needs are fulfilled, it is natural for teachers to consider aspects related to themselves. Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method are doubtlessly important factors, because they influence how teachers use the textbook. Every set of textbook is compiled based on a certain rationale but teachers may not follow this principle. For instance, although the current textbooks are based on Communicative Approach, believing in grammar-translation method, some teachers

may still overwhelm students with plenty of grammatical rules and vocabulary. As a result, it is apparent to realize how teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method influence teachers' textbook selection.

The opinions from teachers having used the particular textbook is emphasized as the second important factor, which also corresponds to the finding of teachers' favorite way of obtaining information on textbook selection. The reason why teachers think of discussing with colleagues as the most effective way may be due to the fact that consulting with teachers is convenient and time-saving. Besides, as one interviewee (T9) mentions, the information from the teachers is more objective than that from workshops held by certain publishing companies.

Publishers' reputation and salespersons' service (including sales promotion and post-sale service) have been put more and more emphasis when teachers select textbooks. It has been five years since the textbook market was open. Through recent years' observation and market survey, teachers have gradually come to realize which publishers can offer the best-quality textbook and earn their trust. Representing the company, salespersons are responsible for promoting the textbook sales and for receiving the teachers' opinions and complaints. Thus, the interaction between teachers and salespersons sometimes can influence the teachers' judgment on the textbook.

In terms of internal factors shown in Table 5.1.1 B, accurate and proper English is teachers' main concern. It is understandable for the teachers to place accuracy and properness as the top priority because English textbooks are designed to, after all, teach English in an accurate and proper language form, instead of pidgin English or other dialectic forms. Once the basic requirement for the textbook is established, teachers start to demand other features that can facilitate students' learning, such as interesting and informative articles, a variety of themes and genres, and different language tasks as well. The fifth priority is related to textbooks' intact package. After examining the content and rationale of textbook itself, teachers will surely shift their attention to the teaching supplementary. Teachers, especially in this computerized age, are more concerned about whether the textbooks can provide any multi-media supplementary that can appeal to students' other sensory stimulus and enhance their learning motivation.

According to the findings of this research, more than half of the teachers take internal factors into more consideration when selecting textbooks. And if the textbook does not meet the expectation, almost half of the teachers will re-examine its internal factors. Based on these two findings, it seems plausible to claim that although English teachers are influenced by the entire educational environment and other people concerned, they still care more about the content and design of the teaching materials

per se, when selecting textbooks.

- 2. Are there any differences between teachers of the public senior high and those of the private senior high in selecting EFL textbooks? What are the differences?**

**Table 5.1.2 A**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (public school teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs.
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
4	Publishers' reputation
5	Salespersons' service
7	Joint college entrance examination
13	School's leadership
15	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (private school teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs.
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Joint college entrance examination
4	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
5	Publishers' reputation
7	Salespersons' service
9	School's leadership
14	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors
<b>P-value</b>	<b>Significant T-test Value</b>
0.03*	School's leadership
0.02*	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors
0.03*	Salespersons' service

**Table 5.1.2 B**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (public school teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Contents include a variety of themes and genres.
4	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
5	The textbook provides an intact package such as workbooks or teacher's manual.
18	Contents include a variety of communicative functions.
15	Contents are well organized, and adopt the spiral model.
11	The teaching load is appropriate based on class hours and practical needs.
14	Content themes do not include biased and stereotyped concepts.
22	The workbook reinforces students' linguistic knowledge
24	The textbook provides multiple ways of assessment.
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (private school teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	The textbook aims to develop four language skills.
4	Contents include a variety of themes and genres.
5	The textbook provides adequate amount of vocabulary.
6	The textbook provides an intact package such as workbooks or teacher's manual
24	Contents include a variety of communicative functions.
20	Contents are well organized, and adopt the spiral model.
23	The teaching load is appropriate based on class hours and practical needs.
29	Content themes do not include biased and stereotyped concepts.
11	The workbook reinforces students' linguistic knowledge
12	The textbook provides multiple ways of assessment.
<b>P-value</b>	<b>Significant T-test Value</b>
0.04*	Content themes do not include biased and stereotyped concepts.

As revealed in Table 5.1.2 A and B above, as far as public school teachers are concerned, when selecting textbooks, they take external factor of salespersons' service (ranking 5), and internal factor of textbooks' intact package (ranking 5) into more account than private school teachers (ranking 7 and 6). The reasons that account for public school teachers' concerns on these two factors are closely related.

According to statistics form Taipei City administration, normally the budgets for the public senior schools are about three times as many as those for private senior schools. Granted more financial support, public schools, as a result, are more quipped with advanced appliances. Exposed to such a favorable learning environment, public school teachers surely require a textbook that can provide a good textbook package including advanced multi-media teaching aids to fit their learning environment. Most important of all, teachers can use these teaching aids to enhance the variety of tasks so that students can be more motivated to learn English. Furthermore, in order to acquire the updated teaching aids or latest information on textbook, it is inevitable for teachers to have a constant contact with salespersons, which may explain why public school teachers think highly of the salespersons' service.

With both of the data from questionnaire survey and the interviews, it is pointed out that private school teachers emphasize the factor of Joint College Entrance Examination more (ranking 3) than public school teachers (ranking 7). It is



difficult to deny the importance of Joint College Entrance Examination to English language teaching in Taiwan. Ever since Joint College Entrance Examination first held in 1954, the wash-back effect has been influencing the English teaching in senior high. It is conceivable for private school teachers to think highly of the Joint College Entrance Examination, because although private schools are educational institutes, they are, to some degree, more business-oriented. With the common policy of recruiting more students, private school teachers have to consider every possible way to help their students to pass the Examination successfully.

On the other hand, under the influence of Joint College Entrance Examination, private school teachers may tend to emphasize the grammatical aspects of the language, a must included in the Entrance Examination, instead of the pragmatic aspects. This imbalanced focus may explain why factors related to Entrance Examination such as the amount of vocabulary (private school teachers' ranking 5 vs. public school teachers' ranking 12), linguistic knowledge (ranking 11 vs. ranking 22), and ways of assessment (ranking 12 vs. ranking 24) are highly emphasized, while those related to content organization (private school teachers' ranking 20 vs. public school teachers' ranking 15), and content themes (ranking 29 vs. ranking 14) are not. With so much attention paid to the Entrance Examination, sometimes, private schools even "modulate" the teaching hours stipulated by MOE to enable students to have

more English classes, at the cost of some “minor” courses, such as physical education, music or art etc., which explains why private school teachers (ranking 23) do not place as much emphasis on the factor related to class hours as their public school counterparts do (ranking 11).

And, in order to promote reputation and establish uniqueness, some private schools deliberately emphasize both grammar and the development of the four language skills of English. Those private schools usually hire more competent teachers or native speakers, hold speech or composition contests, allocate more time on the training of students’ speaking and listening skills, which may explain why some private school teachers (ranking 3) favor the textbook aimed at developing four language skills more than public school teachers (ranking 7) do.

T-test analysis and ranking order also show that private school teachers consider the school’s leadership and teachers’ various roles (ranking 9 and 14) more than public school teachers do (ranking 13 and 15). Generally speaking, private school authorities are more involved in the teachers’ decision-making process than public school ones are. Chen’s study (2002) supports this claim as well. It is indicated that more than half of the private schools in the present research invite the principal, the section chair of the academic affairs, and other school faculties as the members of the textbook selection committee besides English teachers. It seems to conclude that

private school authorities intervene more in the textbook selection than those of public schools.

Moreover, for the sake of reducing personnel expense, private school authorities usually demand teachers to take more than one duty--English teachers and mentors/ administrative personnel. With so heavy workload, private school English teachers are likely influenced to select the textbook with lighter teaching load.

**3. Are there any differences between teachers of the urban senior high and those of the rural senior high in selecting EFL textbooks? What are the differences?**

**Table 5.1.3 A**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (urban school teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
4	Publishers' reputation
5	Salespersons' service
12	Teachers' English proficiency
15	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors <sup>2</sup>
11	The price of the textbook
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (rural school teachers)</b>
1	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
2	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs
3	Publisher' reputation

<sup>2</sup> Although urban school and rural school teachers have the same ranking order of teachers' various roles and the price of the textbook, these two factors reach certain degrees of T-test significance.

4	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
5	Joint college entrance examination
7	Salespersons' service
9	Teachers' English proficiency
15	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors
11	The price of the textbook
<b>P-value</b>	<b>Significant T-test Value</b>
0.01*	Teachers' English proficiency
0.04*	Teachers' various roles such as English teachers or mentors
0.04*	The price of the textbook

**Table 5.1.3 B**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (urban school teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Contents include a variety of themes and genres.
4	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
5	The textbook provides an intact package such as workbooks or teacher's manual.
22	Task design corresponds to Communicative Approach.
19	Contents include a variety of communicative functions.
12	The textbook provides adequate amount of vocabulary.
6	Content themes are updated, reflecting current cultures.
9	Teacher's manual provides cultural and other information.
31	Contents are well connected with those of junior high schools.
21	The workbook reinforces students' linguistic knowledge.
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (rural school teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
4	The textbook provides adequate amount of vocabulary.
5	The textbook aims to develop four language skills.
30	Task design corresponds to Communicative Approach.
24	Contents include a variety of communicative functions.
18	Content themes are updated, reflecting current cultures.

19	Teacher's manual provides cultural and other information.
25	Contents are well connected with those of junior high schools.
15	The workbook reinforces students' linguistic knowledge.
<b>P-value</b>	<b>Significant T-test Value</b>
0.01*	Task design corresponds to Communicative Approach.
0.04*	Contents include a variety of communicative functions.
0.04*	Content themes are updated, reflecting current cultures.
0.01*	Teacher's manual provides cultural and other information.

As displayed in Table 5.1.3 A, urban school teachers emphasize salespersons' service (ranking 5) more than rural school teachers (ranking 7) in selecting textbooks. Generally speaking, urban schools tend to have a larger quantity of classes than rural ones. To make teaching go smoothly in so many classes, they surely prefer to associate with salespersons with good service so that teachers can get fast supply of the textbooks, teaching aids, and other related services. Another possible explanation may be that having plenty of accesses to the latest information, urban school teachers are more active in making comments on the textbooks and, therefore, need a good channel to reflect their points of view, which may account for the reason why urban teachers think highly of salespersons' service.

Cultural issue is also another factor urban school teachers (ranking 6, and 9) take into more consideration than rural ones (ranking 18, and 19). As Lee (1999) indicates that a good teaching material should cover balanced proportion of the

cultural background of the target language and the native language. Urban school teachers place much emphasis on the cultural component probably because students in the urban areas stand more chances to experience different cultures through television, Internet, or movies. In order to cultivate students' positive attitudes towards different cultures, teachers of urban schools definitely prefer a textbook covering certain proportions of cultural components.

Urban school teachers also emphasize Communicative Approach (ranking 22, and 19) more than rural school teachers (ranking 30, and 24) in selecting textbooks. Communicative Approach is one of the essential features of the Curriculum Guidelines for Senior High School enacted 1995. It may be due to the fact that urban school teachers have more opportunities to attend workshops and get accesses to books or journals in promoting the related knowledge, which explains why urban school teachers are more conscious of Communicative Approach.

On the other hand, rural school teachers are less concerned about cultural issues. According to one rural school teachers being interviewed (T8), most of the students in rural schools still struggle hard in linguistic elements, to say nothing of appreciating the deep meanings in the reading articles. Therefore, when selecting textbooks, teachers are concerned more about whether the textbook can help to develop students' basic language skills or not.

Focusing much on the basic language skills due to students' limited English proficiency may also account for the reason why rural school teachers take factors such as the amount of vocabulary (ranking 4), workbook's reinforcement on students' linguistic knowledge (ranking 15), and well-connection with the curriculum of junior high (ranking 25) into more consideration than their urban schools counterparts do (ranking 12, 21, and 31).

T-test analysis and ranking order, shown in Table 5.1.3 A above, reveal that teachers' English proficiency is an important factor to which rural school teachers (ranking 9) pay more attention than urban school teachers (ranking 12). Results of the present study indicates that 6 percent of the total rural school teachers have master's degrees compared with 32 percent of the total urban school teachers, which may imply that rural school teachers stand more chances to concern if they are professionally competent to deal with the curriculum of the senior high. Moreover, due to insufficient opportunities for in-service education may activate rural school teachers' concern with their English language proficiency.

Likewise, it is also indicated from T-test analysis that rural school teachers consider teachers' various roles such as English teachers and mentors/administrative personnel, and the price of the textbook more than urban school teachers do. The plausible reasons may be that the inadequate budget and

teaching faculty force most of the rural school teachers to take more than one duty--mentors/administrative personnel. Playing multiple roles will definitely influence teachers' pedagogical decision-making, because of different teaching load as well as different time allocated on English teaching classes.

As to the price of the textbook, it is of no doubt an issue for rural school teachers to take into consideration. According to one of the interviewees (T8), the price of the current textbooks is about three times as much as the price of the old prescribed one. Although not every student in the rural schools especially in greater Taipei area is in the low socio-economic level, there still exist a small portion of students, who are not as well-off as average students. One rural teacher reveals (T10) that once they have poor students like that, they will notify the salespersons to provide free copy or a discount price.



**4. Will senior teachers show different considering patterns from those of young counterparts in selecting EFL textbooks? What are the differences?**

**Table 5.1.4 A**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (senior teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
4	Publishers' reputation
5	Compilers' profession and academic status
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>External factors (young teachers)</b>
1	Most students' English proficiency and learning needs.
2	Opinions from teachers having used the textbook
3	Teachers' pedagogical belief and teaching method
4	Publishers' reputation
5	Salespersons' service

**Table 5.1.4 B**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (senior teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Contents include a variety of themes and genres.
4	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
5	The textbook provides an intact package such as workbooks or teacher's manual.
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Internal factors (young teachers)</b>
1	The textbook uses accurate and proper English.
2	Reading articles are interesting and informative.
3	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.
4	The textbook aims to develop four language skills.
5	Language tasks vary, and increase students' motivation.

As far as the textbook selection is concerned, the findings from T-test analysis and teachers' interviews show that no salient differences are found between senior teachers and young teachers. Although senior teachers' priorities of external and internal factors differ slightly from young teachers' illustrated in Table 5.1.4 A and B above, it seems that these different factors result not from the long or short service years, but from personal preferences. In other words, not influenced by the length of their teaching years, teachers tend to select their textbooks based on other factors.

Most of the interviewees also confirm that there seems no difference between senior and young teachers, as far as the textbook selection is concerned. Some interviewees point out that instead of service years, what really matters is teachers' personality. No matter how many years one teacher has served, any teachers with a positive learning attitude can make an optimal decision for students.

**5. Is it popular for teachers to use checklists to evaluate internal factors in selecting textbooks? Are they satisfied with the checklists they have used?**

Based on the results of the present study, it is indicated that more than half of the subjects (66.2%) have used checklists to evaluate internal factors when selecting textbooks, and the majority of them (36.9% out of 66.2%) adopt the checklists provided by the school. Among the subjects having used the checklist, only 22.8 percent of the subjects who have used checklists (22.8 out of 66.2%) feel satisfied

with the checklists. That is to say, the majority of the subjects do not regard the checklist as a useful tool to help them to select textbooks. One interviewee (T3) even points out that sometimes he would rather take impressionistic approach to evaluate the textbooks than use any checklists. The reason why most of the teachers do not think highly of the checklists is due to the fact that the checklists they have used are too simplified without pinpointing the key factors they feel concerned about.

The findings of this research correspond to those of Chen's study (2002) indicating that 86 percent of her subjects have used checklists in the process of textbook selection. It seems very popular for English teachers in greater Taipei area to adopt checklists to evaluate textbooks. However, most of the checklists do not meet teachers' expectation. To solve this problem, teachers should be trained to formulate their own checklists. As Wright (1990) suggests, every teaching context is unique on its own, there will be no universal evaluation criteria. Although a nationwide checklist is recommended for teachers' reference, to train teachers to set up their evaluation criteria is the best strategy.

**6. What factors do the compilers generally concern when compiling textbooks?**

**Do those factors correspond to those of teachers'? What are the compilers' opinions on the checklists?**

The results of the interviews for textbook compilers suggest that textbook compilers are generally concerned about students' English proficiency and the degree of authenticity. The importance of the level of students' English proficiency and material's authenticity in the principles of textbook compilation are also recognized by the studies of Cheng (2003) and Chung (2003).

As compilers reveal, the textbooks they compile are designed for the average students and they try to present as natural English as possible to the readers. In views of the concerned factors of both teachers and textbook compilers, it seems that there is a considerable similarity between two of them. Both parties think highly of students' English proficiency and the degree of naturalness and accuracy of English either in textbook selection or in textbook compilation. Therefore, it may be concluded that a good textbook should not only provide readings of natural and accurate English but also be appropriate for general students' English proficiency.

As to compilers' opinions on the checklists, they take a positive attitude towards adopting checklists to select textbooks. However, one compiler (C1) suggests that though with plenty of available resources to assist teachers in the process of

textbook selection, teachers should not fail to exercise their own professional knowledge at the same time. It is implied that with more helps, teachers should also accelerate their professional growth so that they will not be influenced to make any wrong decisions.

## **5.2 Recommendations of the Research**

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations implied from the present paper are illustrated.

First, since most of the teachers and textbook compilers are concerned about the students' English proficiency and learning needs, it is suggested that a needs survey and analysis should be conducted by teachers and publishing companies respectively so that the textbook being selected and compiled can fit more with students' proficiency level and learning needs.

Second, even with the wash-back effect of Joint College Entrance Examination, it is advisable for school authorities, private schools in particular, to give teachers as much power as possible so that a sound decision on textbook selection can be made

Third, it is suggested that both governmental institutes and publishing companies hold regular workshops on textbook selection in rural areas, which

hopefully can activate rural school teachers' participation in workshops, and accelerate professional growth by providing them with related updated knowledge.

Fourth, both senior and young teachers do make certain degrees of contributions to textbook selection. Therefore, experience sharing in English teaching and textbook selection are encouraged between senior and young peers.

Fifth, it is advisable that teachers should learn to establish their own criteria to formulate evaluative checklists, instead of relying on schools or publishing companies. Moreover, to avoid being influenced with bias, teachers should take a firm stance based on their updated professional knowledge in making any sound judgments related to textbook selection and evaluation. However, on the other hand, because most of the models of checklists being reviewed in the present research only contain internal factors, it is still strongly recommended that a more comprehensive model of checklist covering both internal and external factors should be formulated so that teachers can take it for reference to make the optimal decision on textbook selection.

Sixth, apart from the internal factors such as the themes or organization of the textbook, textbook compilers should also pay more attention to the external factors such as the teachers' pedagogical belief or Entrance Examination as revealed in the present study, so that the textbook being compiled can be more comprehensive in all aspects and be related to needs of both teachers and students.

Seventh, due to the increasing attention paid to the salesperson's service by general English teachers, it is, thus, suggested that publishing companies should keep providing teachers with high quality of textbooks by reinforcing the post-sale service, and hopefully students can, in return, use a more appropriate set of textbook.

There is no ideal set of textbook. As Grant (1987, p.118) proposes, "There is indeed no perfect textbook existing, but the best book available for the teachers and their students does exist." Teachers should, therefore, learn to evaluate, adapt, and produce teaching materials so as to ensure a match between the students and the materials they use (Tomlinson, 2002).

### **5.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies**

Although many efforts have been spent on the present study, due to the limited time and deficient finance, the current paper still leaves some room to be improved as suggested below.

First of all, because of the limited number of subjects, the findings of the present study might not reflect the general situation in Taiwan as a whole. It is hoped that a large scale of study, expanding both in areas and number of subjects, can be conducted.

Second, students' response to the textbook selection is not explored in this research. Since students are the main users of the textbook, their opinions should not be ignored. The present study is based on teachers' perspectives to see what factors may influence the textbook selection, but if students' perspectives can be included in the future studies, the research results will be more significant.

Third, more interview subjects from both teachers and textbook compilers should be recruited especially the latter ones, because studies on textbook compilers still remain a lot to be explored. It may be difficult to find a substantial number of subjects willing to be interviewed, because of the time-consuming process of interviews. However, it is still advisable for the future studies to conduct more interviews because the data collected from the interviews do yield insightful findings.

Fourth, the variables, such as genders, educational background, frequency of attending workshops, and the sets of textbooks subjects have used, are suggested to be further processed through co-relation analysis to examine if there exists a close relationship between variables, which can hopefully generate other crucial findings to the present study.

Fifth, because the items listed in the questionnaire have been classified into external and internal factors by the researcher in advance, such a way of classification may inevitably influence teachers' answers. Therefore, it is suggested for the future



studies that a scrambled list of items in the questionnaire can be designed, which is likely to yield a different ranking order, and to generate more meaningful research findings.

Sixth, the new tentative Curriculum Guidelines for the Senior High School will be promulgated in 2005. As Lin (2004, p.16) indicates, the new tentative Curriculum Guidelines will focus more on the understanding of global cultures. As a result, by the time teachers are more conscious of the new Curriculum Guidelines, they may adjust their considerations for the textbook selection, which surely can shed some lights for the future studies.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The present paper investigates what factors English teachers of senior high schools in greater Taipei area take into consideration when selecting textbooks, with particular focus on the comparison of differences between public and private schools, urban and rural schools, and senior and young teachers.

The results of the present study indicate that internal factors are the primary concerns for senior high English teachers in textbook selection. English teachers of senior high schools place much emphasis on the accuracy, appropriateness, and naturalness of English. Moreover, teachers are concerned about other internal

factors such as the design of language tasks, the training of the four language skills, a variety of themes, and the textbook's intact package.

Apart from considering internal factors, English teachers also emphasize some external factors such as students' English proficiency and learning needs, Joint College Entrance Examination, school's leadership, and salespersons' service.

Although the external factor may not play such a vital role as the internal factor in the process of textbook selection, it is still an indispensable element to which most of the teachers pay attention.

In conclusion, in the process of textbook selection, some teachers are granted more freedom, while some teachers are restricted to unfavorable conditions. It is believed that no matter what limitations may influence teachers' decision, as long as teachers can stick to their own professional principles, the best decision can be made to select an optimal set of textbook. On the other hand, besides taking internal factors into account, publishing companies should also pay more attention to external factors such as students' English proficiency and learning needs, teachers' pedagogical belief, Joint College Entrance Examination, and salespersons' service, so that both teachers and students can enjoy higher-quality sets of textbooks.