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## Collection Development in Media Centers in Overseas America and International Independent Schools in Asia

Joyce Bush Whalen  
*University of Northern Iowa*

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## Collection Development in Media Centers in Overseas America and International Independent Schools in Asia

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### Abstract

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Admissions Directors of the schools were asked to provide information regarding the citizenship of the students in kindergarten through grade five in their schools. A questionnaire was sent to the media specialists at the six schools in the International Association of Southeast Asian Schools conference. It was found that multicultural and international literature is addressed in less than sixty percent of the collection development policies. The collections in the schools surveyed contain less than twentyfive percent multicultural and international literature. The media specialists do not use any specialized bibliographies to select these kinds of materials. In a list of choices of general criteria used to select materials pertaining to multicultural and international literature, five of the six media specialists gave "worthy, up-to-date treatment of people and their cultures" the highest score. Half of the respondents to the questionnaire rated the availability of these kinds of literature in the lower half of possible scores. Two of the six media specialists have contacts or publishers in countries other than the United States from whom they order materials.

Collection Development in Media Centers  
In Overseas American and International  
Independent Schools in Asia

A Graduate Research Project  
Submitted to the  
Division of Library Science  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
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By

Joyce Bush Whalen

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This Research Paper by: Joyce Bush Whalen

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Has been approved as meeting the research paper requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

August 5, 2002  
Date Approved

Barbara Safford

[Signature]  
Graduate Faculty Reader

August 21, 2002  
Date Approved

Janey L. Montgomery

[Signature]  
Graduate Faculty Reader

August 23, 2002  
Date Approved

Rick Traw

[Signature]  
Head, Department of Curriculum  
And Instruction

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# Collection Development in Media Centers in Overseas American and International Independent Schools in Asia

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Nature of American and International Independent Schools

On the opening day of school, a second-grade teacher in an American school in China found that her 22 students came from 15 countries (Luebke & Gaw, 2000, p. 23), not an unusual statistic for this kind of school. Overseas American and international independent schools serve well over 300,000 multi-national students around the world (Sherbet & Stone, p. 1). They are located from Albania to Zimbabwe in over 155 countries (The ISS Directory, 1996, p.1), a great leap from the first one that started in Mexico City in 1888. Besides the United States, many other countries sponsor schools outside of the home country. Examples are Britain, Japan, Germany, France and Canada. The expanding world economy and the ease of global communication and international mobility are reasons why the number of people living and working outside their home cultures continues to grow (Luebke & Gaw, 2000, p. 44). Collection development in these overseas schools is unique when the media centers serve such a diverse population.

The importance of these American and international schools overseas cannot be denied. When a multicultural corporation asks a top employee to move that employee's family halfway around the world, one of the first questions asked is about the school for the children of the family. They are expected to be at least as good or better than the school in the home country. In many of these schools, the parents will not be



disappointed. Students are high achievers, which is reflected in the rate of graduates going on to four-year colleges. Of the 214 seniors in the Taipei American School class of 1998-1999, this rate was 98% (Wolfe, 1999, p. 1). Students from this class went on to Amherst, Harvard-Radcliffe, Cornell, Dartmouth, Wellesley, Stanford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and many other top universities (Wolfe, 1999, p. 2).

Another plus for most parents is that these schools have a student population often made up of a multitude of ethnic backgrounds. Taipei American School in Taiwan has a student population of 2134 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. There are over 50 countries represented in the student body (Wolfe, 1999, p. 1). With an enrollment of 1750 students, the International School Bangkok has 48 nationalities (The ECIS International Schools Directory, 1994-5, p. 309). Samples of the countries represented by the student body are Israel, Samoa, Korea, El Salvador and Russia. Besides the expatriate students, in some foreign locations, many national government and business leaders are graduates of these overseas schools. In the list of schools registered with the Office of Overseas Schools in October 1997, of the 97,734 students enrolled, 32% were host country nationals (p. 45). The students study and learn in English but are often bilingual or more.

Not only do the students come from a great mix of countries, but also those coming from the same country are often multicultural. Many of the new students coming to Taipei American School from the United States have parents who were born in Taiwan and are ethnically Chinese but who have lived in the United States for many years. These students were born in the United States and have lived their lives there until the move to Taiwan.

Many overseas American and international schools are housed in state-of-the-art facilities with modern programs and materials. The 1999-2000 Directory of Overseas Schools includes a profile of the physical plant of Jakarta International School in Indonesia, a school with a population of 2300 students. It includes:

206 classrooms, 7 computer labs, 593 instructional computers, 4 auditoriums, 3 cafeterias, 4 infirmaries, 3 tennis courts, 4 gymnasiums, 5 playing fields, 19 science labs, 2 pools, air conditioning, AV equipment, fine arts building, wood shop, auto shop, photography labs, and 4 libraries with 100,000 volumes. (p. 201)

These library facilities are important because there may not be much in the local community. For instance, there are no public libraries that serve the expatriate families in most overseas settings. Krys and Litton (1983) found the following:

Asian librarianship, like the continent itself, has bewildering differences of development; for example, outstanding examples of national and academic libraries are outweighed by the inadequacy, or in some cases, the nonexistence of public and school libraries. (p. 107)

Even if there is a public library, the materials are in the local language. Therefore, the school media center takes on a broader area of responsibility, not only for the students but also for their families and the teachers.

### Collection Development

The unique characteristics of serving the entire expatriate community plus the great diversity of the student body are two areas that make collection development unique in media centers in overseas American and international independent schools. Collection development for school media centers anywhere involves a multitude of processes. Van

Orden (1995) notes that the media specialist carries out the collection management program by:

1. becoming knowledgeable about an existing collection or creating one;
2. becoming familiar with the community (that is, the external environment);
3. assessing the needs of the school's curriculum and other programs as well as the needs of the users;
4. establishing collection development policies and procedures (the overall plan);
5. creating the basis for selection (including policies and procedures to guide selection decisions);
6. identifying criteria for evaluating materials;
7. planning for and implementing the selection process: identifying and obtaining tools, arranging for personal examination of materials, and involving others in the decision making;
8. participating in resource sharing through networking and coordinated collection development;
9. establishing acquisition policies and procedures (that is, guides to obtaining materials);
10. setting up the maintenance program; and
11. evaluating the collection. (p. 23)

Some of these processes become more complicated in an overseas school but they still should be followed.

### Diverse Populations and Multicultural Materials

Van Orden (1995) also states that the media program must “respond to the multicultural diversity of the student population” (p. 8) and that “materials in the media center support the curriculum plus help students learn about themselves and others by presenting ethnic and cultural differences” (p. 9). Rasinski and Padak (1990) believe that “children’s literature can be a powerful way for children to learn about and learn to appreciate other cultures. Literature presents readers with new worlds, new ideas, new options—stuff to reflect upon and to use to better themselves as people as well as readers” (p. 576).

The first organized push in the United States for using multicultural materials “to teach understanding and good will” (Heaton & Lewis, 1995, p. 9) in schools came from the *Reading Ladders* publications in the late 1940s and 1950s. The National Conference of Christians and Jews provided funds to the American Council on Education to pioneer a project in this field in elementary and secondary schools early in 1945 (Heaton & Lewis, 1995). This has escalated to a focus on multicultural education in many school districts and on an emphasis to include diverse materials in media centers.

Multicultural materials have been through a variety of publishing woes. Early in the twentieth century it was difficult to find children’s books that reflected much more than the lives of middle-class Americans. “Minorities groups and the rest of the world appeared exotic, inferior, sometimes threatening, and often times a source of ridicule” (Miller-Lachmann, 1992, p. 5).

As time went on, factors that contributed to more diversity in children’s literature in the United States during the 1960s included a study by Nancy Larrick (1965) called

“The All-White World of Children’s Books”, the civil rights movement and the increased availability of funds for schools and libraries. African-American, Hispanic, Native-American and Asian-American writers had works published. The Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC) was formed and provided information concerning the evaluation of multicultural children’s literature as well as encouraging new authors and illustrators to enter the publishing field.

But the 1980s brought another slip in the number of minority authors having works published. Funds dried up, conservatism blossomed, and political activism slowed. During this decade one flicker of light was the success of small presses publishing work from minority authors (Miller-Lachman, 1992).

#### International Aspects of Children’s Literature

Besides multicultural literature written and published in the United States, international literature is also published in the United States. Like multicultural literature, it has gone through different phases of difficulty with publishing. The beginnings of the international children’s literature movement can be attributed to the efforts of Jella Lepman, a German Jew who escaped the Nazi Holocaust of World War II (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 8). When she returned to her home after the war, she put together a traveling exhibit of children’s books from all over Europe with the hope that “it would help to build bridges of understanding between the children who read them” (p. 8). This was her way of working to prevent an occurrence of another war.

The exhibit was so successful that it became the beginnings of the International Youth Library (IYL) that is located in Munich, Germany. The collection includes children’s literature from all over the world and has over 500,000 volumes in over 100

languages (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 9). Not long after this, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) was also formed. The mission of this organization is “to promote international understanding and world peace through children’s books” (p. 9). Currently 62 nations are members of this organization (p. 9).

Two awards have helped to bring international literature more recognition in the past forty years. Every two years the IBBY sponsors the Hans Christian Andersen Medal. It recognizes an author and an illustrator from the member nations “whose complete works have made the most important international contributions to children’s literature” (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 9-10). The IBBY also produces an Honour List every two years of outstanding, recently published books recommended from member nations that are suitable for publication in other languages. This list is used by publishers worldwide to help find books for publication in other languages. And in the United States in 1968, the American Library Association established the Batchelder Award that honored outstanding books published in translation. Batchelder was a leader in recognizing the wealth of understanding that these types of books could provide. She reminded the literature world that “through translated books, children come to know the books and stories of other nations and thus make a beginning toward international understanding, toward sharing experiences with children who speak and read other languages” (Batchelder, 1988, p. 6). The award is given to an American publisher for a book that was published in the previous year in English in the United States, but that was previously published in a foreign country in another language.

But problems exist that hinder the publication of much international literature in English in the United States. Because so many books are written and published in the

United States, statistically fewer international children's books are published there than even in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 13). Other problems include the additional cost of translation and the difficulty of selling many of these books in the United States. In an overview of the books received in 1995 at the Cooperative Children's Book Center in Madison, Wisconsin, at least 4500 new books were published for children and young adults in the United States that year and 54 of these were translations, only 1.2 % (Horning, Kruse & Schleisman, 1996, p. 15).

As the new millennium dawned, the face of America was changing and the need for multicultural and international literature increased. In some states, the all-white majority became a thing of the past. The year 2000 brought a majority in the state of California from the combination of Hispanics, Native Americans, African-Americans, and Asian-Americans (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2000, p. 38). Today, all the major urban school systems in the United States have children of color as their majority population (Nicholai-Mays, 1990). DePalma (1990) predicted that soon after the year 2000, Black, Hispanic, Asian and American Indian children will constitute one third of the nation's children. Furthermore, according to the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, more than 600,000 people immigrate to the United States annually (Sobol, 1990, p. 27) In an editorial in 1992, Tibbetts and Keeton point out that:

Some time ago America gave up the "melting pot" idea in favor of the "salad bowl" concept whereby differences are appreciated for the color, the flavor and the texture they provide--differences that truly enrich our society. (p. 7)

Changes like this in the United States have helped push for multicultural and ethnic diversity in materials for media centers. "A new vision acknowledges that a dominant

culture does exist within certain contexts, but it also calls for a profound appreciation and fostering of the native cultures of people not born into the dominant culture” (Rasinski & Padak, 1990, p. 576).

Children's literature can help show accurate portrayals of multicultural characters and expand the horizons of all readers. Not only are children exposed to new cultures but also they learn more about their own. Laurence Yep (1994) states, "if you visit another culture, or even read about it, you look at your own culture with new eyes. You understand your culture more" (p. 39).

Norton (1985) believes that the values gained from sharing multicultural literature with children include:

1. Pleasure and enjoyment from hearing the rhythmic language of an African folktale or from vicariously seeing one's continent through the eyes of an early resident;
2. Information and understanding gained from reading about one's geographical and natural history, from discovering the impact of sociological change and from reading about great achievers of all backgrounds;
3. Pride in heritage as children identify with achievers from the past as well as the present, improve their self-concepts and develop a sense of identity;
4. Social development as children discover that all people are human beings who should be considered as individuals, not stereotypes;
5. Language development as children interact with rhymes and poetry and discuss story plots, characterizations, settings and themes;



6. Cognitive development nurtured through literature-related activities that emphasize observing, comparing, hypothesizing, organizing, summarizing, applying and criticizing. (p. 103)

Similarly, some of the reasons Tomlinson (1998) believes that international literature is also needed are:

1. Good stories from other countries bridge geographical and cultural gaps;
2. Some of the best works of children's literature are international;
3. International stories teach children about their peers in other lands, since they bring the people, history, and traditions of these countries to life and counteract stereotypes;
4. Both the emotional and the cognitive aspects of reading international literature make clear to young readers that they have much to gain from knowing about their peers in other lands;
5. By interpreting events in the everyday lives of their characters and depicting long-term changes in the character's lives, international authors of contemporary realistic fiction present truer and more understandable pictures of life in other countries than does the sensation-prone, narrow coverage of television and newspapers;
6. Literature written by natives of a country or region or those who have lived there and studied the country or region gives accuracy, authenticity and an international perspective to classroom materials;
7. International picture book art is often fresh and distinctive;

8. International literature reflects the cultural and language diversity found in our classrooms. (p. 5-6)

### The Effect of Multicultural and International Literature on Collection Management

As the importance of multicultural and international literature became apparent, media specialists in the United States began to look for ways of including these materials in their collections. Carton (1993) concludes that a “key issue in serving the multicultural community is the need to adopt a revised vision of collection development” (p. 3). Many media centers are including ways to select multicultural and international materials in their selection policies. The Dallas (Texas) Independent School District's selection policy includes the following criteria:

1. Books and other materials should accurately portray the perspectives, attitudes and feelings of ethnic groups;
2. Fictional works should have strong ethnic characters;
3. Books should describe settings and experiences with which all students can identify and yet accurately reflect ethnic cultures and lifestyles;
4. The protagonists in books with ethnic themes should have ethnic characteristics but should face conflicts and problems that are universal to all cultures and groups;
5. The illustrations in books should be accurate, ethnically sensitive, and technically well done;
6. Ethnic materials should not contain racist concepts, clichés, phrases or words;
7. Factual materials should be historically accurate;

8. Multiethnic resources and basal textbooks should discuss major events and documents related to ethnic history. (p. 8)

The importance of adding multicultural and international materials to a collection is apparent in Van Orden's recently published book entitled *Selecting Books for the Elementary School Library Media Center* (2000). An entire chapter is devoted to "selecting books that reflect our diverse world" (p. 27-35). In the section for special criteria for multicultural literature, after highlighting the Dallas (Texas) Independent School District's selection policy, she lists additional questions to consider when choosing multicultural materials:

- Are unfamiliar works defined, or can the reader understand them from the context?
- Do minority characters take the initiative in problem solving?
- Are the images of minority characters positive?
- Are racial pride and positive self-image apparent?
- Are descriptions of clothing, hairstyles, food, architecture of home and customs accurate?
- Does the author's attempt to supply information at a child's level of understanding result in overgeneralization? This may foster inaccuracy and be a form of stereotyping.
- Does the work recognize subgroups of the minority group? For example, does the book recognize that different Native American tribes have particular characteristics and patterns? (p. 30)

These questions point to the importance that media specialists have placed on selection of multicultural and international materials in the United States as cultural and ethnic diversity have become more common in the student population in schools. With the diversity being even greater in schools overseas, the need for the media center collection to reflect this diversity is apparent.

### Problem Statement

Overseas American and international schools are a symbol of the global culture toward which the world is moving. Diversity in these school populations aims toward multicultural understanding. Overseas American and international school libraries may not reflect this diversity in their collections.

### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to investigate the collection development process in lower school media centers in overseas American and international independent schools in Asia to see if the collections reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body.

### Hypothesis

1. Multicultural and international literature are specific topics addressed in the collection development policies of sixty percent of the lower school media centers in IASAS schools.
2. Twenty-five percent of the collection in the lower school media centers in IASAS schools is dedicated to multicultural and international literature.
3. The majority of the media specialists in these media centers use standard specialized bibliographies to select multicultural and international materials.

4. Eighty percent of the media specialists will rate that “worthy, up-to-date treatment of people and their cultures” is a high priority when selecting materials.
5. The majority of the media specialists will say that multicultural and international literature is not readily available.
5. The media specialists will have a variety of publishers from many countries from which they order materials.

### Definitions

*Collection development* – the process of developing and maintaining materials for a media center.

*Culture* – the complex, changing nexus of values, attitudes, beliefs, practices, traditions, social institutions, and so on, of a community. Included as elements of culture are religion, language, foods, history, dress, and so on (Cordeiro, Reagan, & Martinez, 1994, p. 20).

*Cultural diversity* – refers to the presence in a particular society of different cultural groups.

*International children's literature* – for those who live in the United States, it is the body of books originally published for children in a country other than the United States in a language of that country and later translated into English and published in the United States (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 4).

*Lower school* – grades included are kindergarten through five.

*Multicultural children's literature* – literature that represents *any* distinct cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail. (Yokota, 1993)

*Overseas American independent school* – private schools outside of the United States that reflect the American features of the extracurricular programs, that encourage student involvement and school spirit and that allow and encourage parent participation in the school's governance plus reflect an American curriculum. (Brown, 2000) There may be some tie to the United States government. For example, the school may be registered as a corporation in a state.

*International school* – much the same as an American overseas school, but with no ties to the United States.

### Assumptions

Schools will be able to supply information regarding the citizenship of their students. The media centers will have collection development policies. Staff members of the schools will provide accurate data.

### Limitations

The six schools to be studied belong to the International Association of Southeast Asian Schools conference. They include International School Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta International School (Indonesia), International School of Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), International School Manila (Philippines), Singapore American School (Singapore), and Taipei American School (Taiwan).

Because schools do not have records of ethnicity of their students, citizenship of the students will be used.

Conclusions cannot be generalized for all overseas American and international independent schools.

## Significance

The results of the study will show if the cultural diversity of the student body has an effect on the collection development process and address the issue of children having multicultural and international materials at their disposal.

The results of the study will show what criteria and resources the media specialists use to select multicultural and international materials.

Ideas from the various media specialists in these schools can help the others to find greater access to materials from places other than the United States.

## Chapter 2

### Related Literature

A review of the literature found areas of consideration related to ethnic diversity being reflected in collections to be: the process of collection development of multicultural materials, the quality of multicultural materials, and why it is important to have the library collection reflect the diversity in the school.

#### Collection Development of Multicultural Materials

Multicultural materials support curriculum study on ethnic and cultural differences. The materials also help students learn about themselves and about individuals whose backgrounds are different from their own.

Brown did research addressing the collection development and selection procedures for multicultural literature by children's librarians in a large metropolitan city in 1995. Ten children's librarians were interviewed about how they select multicultural materials for their collections and an observation was made during the selection process. The qualitative research found that the ethnic make up of a community in which the library is located had a great effect on selections for the collection. Every participant mentioned the importance of the patrons and the community they serve and how these factors affected the selections they made (p. 58). The research noted that many of the librarians purchased more materials about an ethnic group because that group made up a large part of the community they serve (p. 95).

The research also found that the selection of these materials differed little from the way other material was chosen. The librarians stated that there was not a written selections policy for their libraries but when asked about selection criteria, responses



included: “quality, readability, child appeal, authority, accuracy, reviews in professional literature, and book lists” (Brown, 1996, p. 11).

In a paper presented in 1994 at the annual meeting of the International Association of School Librarianship, Lessens and Hall-Ellis agreed with the above findings. They stated that multicultural literature must meet the criteria for all good literature. At times, it may also need to be evaluated on a more individual basis, including checks for accuracy and authenticity, avoidance of stereotypes and for the way language and dialect is used.

In another study Shorey (1996) did a case study of four exemplary library media specialists to see how they “define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools” (p. ii). The researcher used a naturalist inquiry approach in the case study by observing and interviewing the library media specialists and concluding with a document analysis. All four of the media specialists had been choosing multicultural literature for their collections for some time. They agreed that the quality of what is available had improved during recent years. The research found that they chose multicultural literature with the same criteria they used to choose any book: “good stories, good plots, good themes, and strong characterization” (p. 179). Each also depended on the professional reviews to gain information about new or unfamiliar multicultural literature and materials.

### Multicultural Materials

As the publishing of multicultural materials has increased over the past few decades, studies have been done to assess the quality of these materials. A research project that looked at picture books examined them for cultural diversity and whether or

not they were appropriate for the cultural differences of the students in that school. The content analysis was done on 201 books in a lower school library. The researcher found that the characters in the majority of the titles were realistic and there was little stereotyping. However, the diversity of the collection did not fit the needs of the student body since it did not reflect the population of the school (Mosely, 1997, p. 22).

A different type of material was examined in another study that also did a content analysis. Three issues of 15 children's periodicals were looked at for number of minorities portrayed in articles about people and whether the focus of the article was positive or not. Illustrations and advertisements were also included in this research. Times that minorities were pictured were counted. The research found that most of the children's magazines were doing a good to exemplary job of exhibiting multicultural awareness in their illustrations and advertising. However, the percentage of articles featuring minority-group children or adults was not yet representative of the population. (Markes, 1991, p. 40).

#### Importance of Library Collection Reflecting the Population of the School

Studies to validate the underlying issue of the importance of the library media center collection reflecting the diversity of the student body include research on children's developmental readiness of global concepts, ethnic attitudes and prejudice and the effects of multicultural materials on the perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of students toward racial and ethnic groups.

Research conducted by Lambert and Klineberg (1967) indicated that lower school students are at an optimal age for learning about other cultures. 3,300 students, ages 6, 10, and 14, in 11 parts of the world participated in the study. An individual interview was

conducted in the native language with each participant. Some questions were structured but left open ended enough that spontaneity of response was to be provided for. The children were asked to discuss themselves and their own national group plus seven standard reference peoples. The research found that the children 10 years or younger found more similarities than differences between themselves and the other groups and these differences were superficial (p. 10). They were also receptive to learning about them. However, by the time students reached age 14, the differences took precedence and were based on personalities or political or religious behaviors that often had negative connotations. By this age, the children were not as receptive about learning about other cultures.

Ethnic attitudes and prejudice were also studied in research done in Australia (Phillips, 1982) in children in grades five and six. The study began with free discussion about playmates with children, and the collection of statements made most frequently by them about ethnic groups. The acceptance of other ethnic groups by evaluating, judging and defining were reflected in the statements. Degrees of intimacy, seen as desirable with members of other ethnic groups were consistently expressed in a descending order of demonstrable social acts as follows: 6. not to play with, 5. to play with at school, 4. to have home to play, 3. to have to tea, 2. to have to stay overnight, 1. to marry when grown up (p. 92-93). Then a quantitative method of research using a written questionnaire was developed. The findings showed that "the children did not wish social proximity with a number of groups because they were unfamiliar with them" (p. 91).

Banks (1991) states that Litcher and Johnson did one of the most important studies of the effects of curriculum materials on students' racial attitudes in 1969. The

study was one of the most carefully designed and implemented of its kind. In this study in a midwestern city in the United States, the effects of multiethnic readers on the attitudes toward African Americans of second-grade white students were examined. The experimental group, including 34 children, used a multiethnic reader for four months. The reader included characters from several different racial and ethnic groups. The 34 children in the control groups used the regular reader in which only white Anglo people were included. The researchers concluded that the students who used the multiethnic readers developed more positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups than did the comparison group.

### Summary

Research pertaining to multicultural materials in lower school media centers has accessed the quality of the materials in both books and periodicals. This research has found that the quality is high if materials are chosen carefully. The selection of multicultural materials differed little from the way others were chosen. Material reflecting the diversity of the student body was examined and the research showed that this is important but was not always what was found in schools. Children ages 10 and younger were receptive to learning about other cultures. Research also found that not being familiar with a number of ethnic groups affected the desire of children to spend time with those groups. Further research concluded that using literature with a multiethnic slant helped students develop more positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to investigate the collection development process in media centers in overseas American and international independent schools in Asia to see if the collections reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body.

#### Research Design

The study used a quantitative research approach in which a survey was the chosen vehicle for the examination of the population. Powell (1997) states, "a survey is a group of research methodologies commonly used to determine the present status of a given phenomenon" (p. 57). From a well-done survey, one can make generalizations from a smaller group to a larger group from which the subgroup has been selected (Powell, 1997). A survey was also chosen for this study because of the geographically dispersed population. A cross sectional survey, which collects data at just one point in time, was used.

Of the group of methodologies possible with the survey approach, the questionnaire fit the type of data needed best. Powell (1997) states that the questionnaire encourages frank answers, eliminates variation in the questioning process, allows the participant to respond at leisure which encourages well-thought-out, accurate answers, makes data easy to collect and analyze, and is relatively inexpensive to administer. (p. 90-91)

This method of research provided the data needed to determine if the media centers reflect the diversity in the student body of the schools surveyed.

## Population

The population used in the survey consisted of the six schools that make up the International Association of Southeast Asian Schools conference. They include International School Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta International School (Indonesia), International School of Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), International School Manila (Philippines), Singapore American School (Singapore) and Taipei American School (Taiwan). These schools each have great diversity in their student bodies. Their media center budgets are generous so that the opportunity for purchasing a wide variety of materials is possible. The lower school media center in each school was considered one unit of analysis. The media specialists in the lower school media centers were asked to complete the survey. If there was more than one media specialist in the media center, it was asked that the one most responsible for collection development fill out the questionnaire. A single-stage sampling procedure was used.

## Procedure

An initial questionnaire was sent to the director of admissions of each school to survey the ethnic diversity of the student body of that school. A cover letter with a form was included. These items are Appendixes A and B.

A self-designed questionnaire was developed for the research. This questionnaire is modeled after a questionnaire by Tjoumas (1993). It included a cover letter, multiple-choice questions, and the closing instructions. These items are Appendixes C and D.

Once the questionnaire was developed, it was pilot-tested. Anderson (1998) states that pilot testing is important because it helps identify ambiguities in the instructions, clarifies the wording of questions, and alerts one to omissions or unanticipated answers in

multiple choice questions (p. 179). Two media specialists not included in the survey were asked to complete the questionnaire and give comments regarding the length of the questionnaire and their overall reactions to it. This was followed-up with e-mail conversations with the participants of the pilot-test. Once these written comments were reviewed, a revision was made of the instrument.

The questionnaire was e-mailed in April 2002 to the lower school media specialists of the six-targeted schools. A cover letter was included. A follow-up was sent two weeks later. After four weeks of the initial mailing, a reminder with a duplicate questionnaire was e-mailed to those schools that had not responded.

The data gathered in my research was analyzed. Individual schools are not identified. The summaries written about the research have no references to particular schools.

## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis

Overseas American and international schools are symbols of the global culture toward which the world is moving. Diversity in these school populations aims toward multicultural understanding. Overseas American and international school libraries may not reflect this diversity in their collections, however. The purpose of this study was to investigate the collection development process in lower school media centers in six of these schools in Asia to see if the collections reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body. The schools surveyed are in the International Association of Southeast Asian Schools (IASAS) conference.

The first step of the research was to find the ethnic diversity of the student body of the schools surveyed. Since the schools do not have records of the ethnicity of their students, it was assumed that finding the citizenship of the students would be a good indicator of ethnicity. The Admissions Directors of the six schools were asked for the number of students in kindergarten through grade five and their citizenship. One of the six Admissions Directors did not respond.

Table 1 reflects the percentage of American and non-American citizens in these schools.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of American and Non-American Citizenship of Lower School Children in IASAS Schools, Grades Kindergarten through Grade Five

School	Number of students	American citizens	Non-American citizens	Percentage of American citizens	Percentage of non-American Citizens
1	414	93	321	22%	78%
2	672	250	422	37%	63%
3	777	461	316	59%	41%
4	1159	261	898	23%	77%
5	1387	1039	348	75%	25%

Countries other than the United States represented by citizenship include Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, British, Canada,



Chile, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holland, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Singapore, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela, and Viet Nam. Three of the five schools that responded have over 50% of their student population with citizenship of a country other than the United States while the other two have 25% and 41% respectively.

All six media specialists responded to a questionnaire. The first two inquiries on the questionnaire addressed the first hypothesis of this research which was that multicultural and international literature are specific topics addressed in the collection development policies of sixty percent of the lower school media centers in IASAS schools. The first inquiry on the questionnaire was “Is children’s multicultural literature a specific topic addressed in your library’s collection development policy?” Four of the six respondents (66.6 %) replied positively to this question. Two thirds of the media specialists address multicultural literature in their collection development. One media specialist commented,

When I select books, I try to get the best books with the highest recommendations. They may be multicultural or they may not. As we have students from many cultures (and a lot of cultures do not have a vast amount of books published about that culture) I tend to select books for students of that culture, so they can have some identity with that culture. Korean, for instance. Many times I will buy a book about a Korean family or subject matter because I think it is important for the Korean students living in another culture to be able to identify with their own culture. It may not have the highest review, but I select

it anyway-especially if we have a shortage in the area. (Anonymous questionnaire response)

Question two was, "Is children's international literature a specific topic addressed in your library's collection development policy?" Three of the six media specialists (50%) reported that this is specifically mentioned in their collection development policy.

The data indicate that less than sixty percent of the six American or international schools surveyed address both multicultural and international literature in their collection development policies therefore the researcher rejected hypothesis one. Two schools responded that neither multicultural nor international literature is addressed in their collection development policies. One of these schools has 63% of its student body that is non-American.

Of the six responses to each of the two questions above, five of the responses matched. Either the media specialist did or did not address both multicultural and international literature in the five media centers. In only one of the media centers was multicultural literature addressed but not international literature.

The next two questions on the questionnaire addressed the second hypothesis which was that the collection would include twenty-five percent multicultural and international literature. "What percentage of your 2000-2001 children's *collection* was dedicated to multicultural literature?" was the first of these questions. Three media center collections include 1%-9%, one has 10%-19% and one has 20%-29% multicultural literature in the collection. One was not able to determine the amount of multicultural literature and another that did answer said it was hard to determine the amount. The school with the highest percentage (78%) of non-American citizens had the highest percentage of multicultural materials in its collection (20-29%) but this was not

true of the two schools that had the next highest percentages (77% and 63%) of non-American citizens.

In response to the question, “ What percentage of your 2000-2001 children’s *collection* was dedicated to international literature?” three respondents answered 1%-9% and two answered 10%-19%. One was not able to determine the amount. Table 2 shows that even though all of these schools have a large percentage of their student body that is international, the part of their collections that reflect a multicultural or international flavor is small. The researcher rejected the second hypothesis.

Table 2: Percentage of Non-American Students and Estimates of Percentage of Multicultural and International Literature in Collections in Lower School IASAS Schools, Grades Kindergarten through Grade Five

School	% of Non-Americans	% of Multicultural Literature	% of International Literature
1	25%	No response	No Response
2	41%	10-19%	10-19%
3	63%	1-9%	1-9%
4	77%	1-9%	10-19%
5	78%	20-29%	1-9%
6	No response	1-9%	1-9%

Each of the six media specialists is responsible for the selection of materials for her/his respective media center. Three of the media specialists consider student suggestions, teacher recommendations and parent requests when considering materials to order. Another media specialist commented,

The librarian makes the selections based on identified needs, requests, (and) suggestions from students, parents and teachers. Curriculum changes or updates are also important. A careful review of the material available in the collection is made to see that materials are available to support changes-and new materials are added to complete the collection.

(Anonymous questionnaire response)

The majority of the media specialists use recommendations from others to help select materials. None commented on whether or not they acted on recommendations for materials from other countries.

Of the seven specialized multicultural or international bibliographies listed in question six, none is used by any of the media specialists for selection, therefore hypothesis three is rejected. Five of the six media specialists said they do not have any of the bibliographies. One media specialist commented that he/she had two of the titles but does not use them for selection. This media specialist also commented that *Children's Books from Other Countries* by Carl M. Tomlinson "looks interesting, perhaps I'll order it." Another media specialist asked, "Of the bibliographies listed, which are the best?"

The reason given for not using these specialized bibliographies by two media specialists was that they did not have them in their media center. All six commented that they use professional journals for selection. One said, "Never thought of using those tools – no pressing demand for multicultural or international lit: but have been in search of where to buy books/English translations/books in English from other countries especially those whose nationalities are represented in our schools." This school also commented, "We were fortunate to be able to buy the International Board on Books (IBBY) 2000 Honour List, a collection of the best books in illustration and in writing from over 60 countries. This represented countries whose books are never reviewed in journals from the United States, but also carried no English translations." In a follow-up question to this school, I asked if the books came with cataloguing. The media specialist replied that they had to do the cataloguing for these books. Even though the media specialist had already stated that there was no pressing demand for multicultural or international literature, it is impressive that the school has purchased this set of books.

All of the media specialists said they use professional journals to order most materials.

The journals used most often by the media specialists in the schools surveyed are included on

Table 3. Only one of the journals is from a country other than the United States.

Table 3: Professional Journals Used by IASAS Media Specialists for Selection

Journal	Number of Schools
American Libraries	1
Booklinks	2
Booklist	4
Horn Book	1
Magpies (Australian)	1
School Library Journal	4
Teacher Librarian	1

One of the media specialists commented, “Our use of *School Library Journal* and *Booklist* as our main selection tools says it all. It is extremely difficult to select ‘multicultural’ stuff using these.” This is an accurate statement because these journals do not focus on literature that is international or multicultural.

Another media specialist said, “A major portion of our selection decisions are made based on support of our curriculum which, by its very nature, has us seeking multicultural literature.” This is from a media specialist who said multicultural and international literature were not specific topics addressed in their collection policy. He/she also commented, “Translated literature for children is a tricky proposition in my experience, as it is not always done well.” The research stated earlier in this paper came to the same conclusion.

In a list of choices of general criteria used to select materials pertaining to multicultural and international literature, five out of the six media specialists rated “worthy, up-to-date treatment of people and their cultures” the highest score. The researcher accepted hypothesis four. One media specialist commented,

Your survey question regarding international literature re: physical format of the book,

often, we are just so happy to get a sampling of literature from another country, that we overlook other requirements we impose for US-published books. (Anonymous questionnaire response)

In rating the availability of multicultural and international literature, a rating scale of “not accessible, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and extremely accessible” was used. The ratings are shown in Table 4. It is important to note that these responses are perceptions of the media specialists surveyed, and because of the wide variety of answers, it indicates to the researcher that they may not know what the availability is. Since hypothesis five was that the majority of the media specialists would rate the availability as not readily available, this hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4: Ratings Reflecting the Availability of Multicultural and International Literature by IASAS Media Specialists.

	Not Accessible	1	2	3	4	5	Extremely Accessible
School 1	+						
School 2			+				
School 3			+				
School 4				+			
School 5					+		
School 6						+	

Even though there were two separate questions that asked for answers separately regarding multicultural and international literature, each media specialist replied with the same answer for each. For instance, if a media specialist answered “2” for multicultural literature, he/she answered “2” for international literature also. Fifty percent of the media specialists rated the availability of both multicultural and international literature in the lower part of the scale.

Question twelve on the questionnaire addressed the final hypothesis, which was that the media specialists would have a variety of publishers from many countries from which they order materials. Two of the media specialists reported they buy materials that are found in local

bookstores and from local publishers in the country in which they reside. One also said he/she orders from publishers from Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Taiwan and China but did not give any more information. Another media specialist uses personal contacts in Australia, Great Britain, Belgium and Singapore to order materials. But most materials purchased for all six schools are ordered from the United States. One media specialist commented, "We would be interested in getting connected to publisher/booksellers/jobbers servicing publishing companies outside the US – imported books do not enjoy tax exemptions in our country." Hypothesis five was rejected.

## Chapter 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the collection development process in lower school media centers in six American and international schools in Asia to see if the collections reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body.

The study used a quantitative research approach in which a questionnaire was the chosen vehicle for the examination of the population. The population used in the survey consisted of the six schools that make up the International Association of Southeast Asian Schools conference. They include the International School Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta International School (Indonesia), International School of Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), International School Manila (Philippines), Singapore American School (Singapore) and Taipei American School (Taiwan).

#### Summary

The Admissions Director in each school was asked to provide information regarding the number of students in grades kindergarten through grade five plus their citizenship. Since the schools do not have records of the ethnicity of their students, it was assumed that finding the citizenship of the students would be a good indication of their ethnicity. Five of the six Admissions Directors provided the requested information.

All six media specialists responded to the questionnaire. Their responses along with the information provided by the Admissions Directors are summarized in Table 5.



Table 5: Summary of Findings from IASAS Admissions Directors and Media Specialists Regarding Citizenship of Students and Collection Development of Multicultural and International Literature

School	# of Students: Grades K-5	% of Non-American Students	% of Multicultural Literature in Collection	% of International Literature in Collection	% of Specialized Bibliographies Used in Selection	Availability: Multicultural, International Lit: (not access,1,2,3,4,5, highly access)
1	414	78%	20-29%	1-9%	0	2
2	672	63%	1-9%	1-9%	0	Not assess
3	777	41%	10-19%	10-19%	0	5
4	1159	77%	1-9%	10-19%	0	2
5	1387	25%	No response	No response	0	4
6	-	-	1-9%	1-9%	0	3

The research showed that there is a high percentage of non-American students in each of the schools surveyed. Multicultural literature is a specific topic addressed in 66% of the media centers collection development policies. International literature is addressed in 50% of the schools media center collections. In half of the schools, the percentage of multicultural literature included in the collection is 1-9%. One of six of the media centers has 10-19% and one has 20-29%. Regarding international literature, 1-9% of the collection represents this type of literature in three of the schools, and two have 10-19%. The media specialist is responsible for collection development in each of the schools. None of these media specialists use any of the seven multicultural and international literature bibliographies listed. All of the media specialists use professional journals to order most materials. In a list of choices of general criteria used to select multicultural and international literature, “Worthy, up-to-date treatment of people and their cultures” was rated the highest score by 83% of the media specialists. Fifty percent of the media specialists rated the availability of both multicultural and international literature in the lower half of the possible scores.

## Conclusions

Overseas American and international schools are symbols of the global culture toward which the world is moving. Diversity in these school populations aims toward multicultural understanding. The research done for this study revealed that it is important for the collection in a media center to reflect the cultural diversity of the population that it serves. Many overseas American and international schools have a great number of non-American students as a part of their student body. The results of the survey of six of these schools in Asia show that multicultural and international literature are not as big a part of their collections as they should be. These kinds of literature are not only important for those people from the country in which it was written or written about, but it is also important for others. Through multicultural and international literature, not only do children learn about their own culture but children also learn about the culture of others.

Administrators and media specialists may not be aware of the need to make the collection of multicultural and international literature a priority in the collection development policies. One might speculate that if the library collection has not shown an increase in percentage of these types of literature, classroom teachers may not have demanded these materials. It is important to raise the awareness of the need among administrators, media specialists and classroom teachers. Workshops explaining the need to each of these groups at conferences are recommended by this researcher. Specific information on where to find the materials would also be excellent information for media specialists.

The media centers in overseas American and international schools should be a cornucopia of literature from around the world just as the student body reflects a great mix of cultures. The media specialists must put more of their efforts into this aspect of management. This researcher

recommends that media specialists in these media centers focus their efforts in finding and obtaining the best literature for children from around the world. One good source is the specialized bibliographies that have been published just for this purpose. Another way of finding this literature is sharing the names of publishers and their addresses with media specialists in other schools. Recruiting help from parents from other countries is also a possibility. With clear instructions of the type of literature the media specialist is targeting, parents may be of assistance when they go on home leave. Other sources may be the International Board of Books Honour List and lists that are available from the International Youth Library in Munich. The researcher believes that as the world becomes a more global culture, media specialists may request from publishers that international and multicultural literature become a bigger focus for publishers and their publishing efforts.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

Further study of this topic could include the same survey done on a larger scale in Asia and in independent American and international schools in other regions of the world, in local culture schools and in Department of Defense Schools in relation to the ethnicity of the members of the Armed Forces. The survey audience could also be expanded to include the secondary media centers in each of the schools.

It is possible that schools have not taken into consideration the importance of multicultural understanding when writing their goals, mission and curriculum and how the media collection can help in a positive way. There might be a need for schools to review these to be sure this important aspect of education in a global community is included.

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## Appendix A

April 15, 2002

Name  
Director of Admissions  
Singapore American School  
Singapore

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a graduate student in the School Library Media Specialist program at the University of Northern Iowa, I am conducting research concerning the lower school library collection and how it reflects the make-up of the student body in IASAS schools. In order to do this, I first need to collect information about the number of students and the countries from which they hold citizenship. Your help in the study is greatly appreciated.

All information received will be confidential and no school or individual will be identified in the data analysis or conclusions. Please complete the enclosed form and return it in the self-addressed envelope by May 1, 2002.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joyce B. Whalen  
800 Chung Shan N. Rd. Sec. 6  
Taipei 111  
Taiwan

Appendix B

Library Collection and Citizenship Research

Student enrollment of grades K-5 (2001-2002): \_\_\_\_\_

Name and position of person sending the information \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please send a computer printout with the countries of citizenship and number from each country for the students in grades kindergarten through grade five.



## Appendix C

April 15, 2002

Name  
Library Media Specialist  
Singapore American School  
Singapore

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a graduate student in the School Library Media Specialist program at the University of Northern Iowa, I am conducting research concerning the lower school library collection and how it reflects the make-up of the student body in IASAS schools.

I have sent a questionnaire to the admissions office at your school to ask for information about the number of students in the lower school and the countries from which they hold citizenship. The enclosed questionnaire is asking for information regarding the collection in your library. If there is more than one media specialist in your media center, please have the one most responsible for collection development fill out the questionnaire. Your help in the study is greatly appreciated.

All information received will be confidential and no school or individual will be identified in the data analysis or conclusions. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed envelope by May 1, 2002.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joyce B. Whalen  
800 Chung Shan N. Rd. Sec. 6  
Taipei 111  
Taiwan

## Appendix D

### Reflection of Library Collection and Student Citizenship Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer the following questions by circling your response. Some of the questions include an area to write a free response.

For use in this questionnaire **the definition of multicultural children's literature is literature that represents any distinct cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail. The definition of international literature for this questionnaire is for those living in the United States, it is a body of books originally published for children in a country other than the United States in a language of that country and later published in the United States.**

1. Is children's multicultural literature a specific topic addressed in your library's collection development policy?

Yes    No

2. Is children's international literature a specific topic addressed in your library's collection development policy?

Yes    No

3. What percentage of your 2000-2001 children's *collection* was dedicated to multicultural literature?  
50%-59%   40%-49%   30%-39%   20%-29%   10%-19%   1%-9%   none

4. What percentage of your 2000-2001 children's *collection* was dedicated to international literature?

50%-59%   40%-49%   30%-39%   20%-29%   10%-19%   1%-9%   none

5. Who selects materials for the children's collection in your library?

---

6. Please rate, not rank, the specialized bibliographies listed below with 1 being the *least* important and 5 being the *most* important in terms of assisting you in choosing multicultural and international literature for children:

- A. Kruse, G. M., Horning, K. T., Schliesman, M. with Tana, E. (1997). *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults: A Selected Listing of Books By and About People of Color.*

Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

- B. Kuharets, Olga R. (Ed.) (2001). *Venture Into Cultures: A Resource Book of Multicultural Materials And Programs.*

Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

- C. Miller-Lachmenn, Lyn (1995). *Global Voices, Global Visions.*

least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

- D. Morantz, Sylvia & Morantz, Kenneth (1994). *Multicultural Picture Books: Art for Understanding Others (Volumes 1 & 2).*

Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

- E. Thomas, Rebecca L. (1996). *Connecting Cultures: A Guide to Multicultural Literature for Children.*

Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

F. Tomlinson, Carl M. (1998). *Children's Books from Other Countries*.  
 Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

G. Yokota, J. (Ed.) & the Committee to Revise the Multicultural Booklist (2001).  
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 Never use            least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

H. Other(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 least important   1 2 3 4 5 most important

7. What criteria do you use in deciding what materials pertaining to multicultural and international literature should be included in the children's collection? Please rate each criterion listed below with 1 being the *least* important and 5 being the *most* important in making your selection choices:

A. Author's reputation	1 2 3 4 5
B. Publisher's reputation	1 2 3 4 5
C. Value to the collection	1 2 3 4 5
D. Range of subject matter	1 2 3 4 5
E. Worthy, up-to-date treatment of people & their cultures	1 2 3 4 5
F. High literary quality	1 2 3 4 5
G. Creativity	1 2 3 4 5
H. Scarcity of materials	1 2 3 4 5
I. Originality	1 2 3 4 5
J. Readability	1 2 3 4 5
K. Physical make-up (type, binding, paper)	1 2 3 4 5
L. Arrangement (Preface, table of contents, index, appendices)	1 2 3 4 5
M. Accuracy	1 2 3 4 5
N. Authenticity	1 2 3 4 5
O. Objectivity	1 2 3 4 5
P. Illustration (Quality, placement)	1 2 3 4 5
Q. Cost	1 2 3 4 5
R. Other _____	1 2 3 4 5

8. How would you rate the availability of multicultural literature for children?  
 extremely accessible   1 2 3 4 5 not accessible

9. How would you rate the availability of international literature for children?  
 extremely accessible   1 2 3 4 5 not accessible

10. Do you order materials from publishers/companies located in any country  
 other than the United States?  
 Yes    No

11. Comments: