# A Study on the Lyrics of Chinese and English Children's Songs in International Education

Caicai Feng[1,*]

[1]College of General Education, Guangdong University of Science and Technology, Dongguan, Guangdong 523083, China
[*]Corresponding author. Email: 57079540@qq.com

## ABSTRACT

**Children's songs, as an important tool for children's cultural enlightenment, are also an important carrier of cultural heritage. Because of the influence of different languages and cultures, the culture of children's songs varies from country to country. Because the number of users is the largest, in international education schools, how to learn Chinese and English nursery rhymes has always been a hot research topic. In this paper, we use Python tools to analyze the lyrics of Chinese and English nursery rhymes. And through comparative analysis, we find the similarities and differences between Chinese and English nursery rhymes, so that it is more convenient for foreign people to learn Chinese or English nursery rhymes. In addition, there are the first 80 high-frequency lists of Chinese children's songs and the first 80 high-frequency lists of English children's songs.**

*Keywords: English children's songs, Chinese children's songs, education, high frequency words, similarities and differences*

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a carrier and tool of national and cultural heritage, children's songs play an important role in the cultural enlightenment of young groups. In the trend of globalization, people of all countries have frequent cultural exchanges and learning. People can often study a country's nursery rhyme culture, so as to understand the country's history, current situation and educational philosophy. Because of its simple lyrics and distinctive music features, children's songs are often first learned by learners. Chinese nursery rhymes and English nursery rhymes have become the most popular teaching contents in international education in recent years because of their large proportion of users in the world. How to quickly learn and promote Chinese and English nursery rhymes has been a hot topic in international education.

However, Chinese nursery rhymes use Chinese and English nursery rhymes use English, and the two languages are very different. In addition, they are also affected by the huge cultural differences between China and Britain. All of these have become the biggest obstacle to the learning and promotion of Chinese and English nursery rhymes in international education.

In this paper, in order to minimize the impact of different language systems, we will use Python tools to make a statistical analysis of the lyrics of Chinese and English nursery rhymes. Through comparative analysis, it is found that there are similarities and differences between Chinese and English nursery rhymes. Finally, it studies and considers how to better learn and promote the education of Chinese and English nursery rhymes, so as to make it more convenient for international people to learn them.

## II. METHOD

### A. Research object

In this paper, we select 200 Classic English pop songs as the research object, and 200 Classic Chinese pop lyrics as the research objects. In terms of English nursery rhymes, we have collected 200 classical European and American nursery rhymes, including mother goose nursery rhymes[1]: "Ten Little Indians", "Old Macdonald", "Yon Yonson", "London Bridge", "The Hokey Pokey", "Are you Sleeping", "hoo fly, Don't Bother me", "Skip to my Lou", "Don't Cry", "In the Bedroom", "Did you Ever See a Lassie", "Good Night", etc.; In terms of Chinese children's songs, we mainly collected 200 Classic Chinese nursery rhymes in the past 40 years, covering Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, nostalgia, modern pop songs, game nursery rhymes, etc. For example: "throw away handkerchief", "a penny", "happy clapping song", "Lu Binghua", "mother's kiss", "little bee", "Lullaby", "schoolboy", "call", "grass", "pair of flowers", "snail and oriole", "where is spring", "cucurbit baby", "childhood", "learning from Lei Feng's good example", etc.

*B. Research method*

The lyrics of 200 classical collected. The first step is to simply delete the lyrics. For example, the repeated part of the chorus is deleted, and the European and American children's songs and 200 classical Chinese children's songs are calculation frequency is not included. In the second step, we use the word segmentation function of Python's Jieba library to calculate the English word frequency of the selected English nursery rhyme text and the Chinese word frequency statistics of the Chinese children's song lyrics text, and get the output results. The third step is to convert the output result to Python dictionary mode:

(key: value) = (word: frequency). Frequency, that is, the frequency of occurrence. The fourth step is to sort (word: frequency) in order of frequency from large to small. In this paper, only the first 80 high-frequency words sorted by frequency from large to small are selected for each output result.

*C. Output results and analysis*

First, this paper analyzes the word frequency of 200 classical European and American children's songs by python, and outputs the most frequent 80 words in English nursery rhymes, as shown in "Table I".

TABLE I.    THE TOP 80 HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS OF ENGLISH NURSERY RHYMES

| word | freq | word | freq | word | freq | word | freq |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| the | 989 | dear | 106 | be | 62 | three | 46 |
| a | 614 | with | 103 | was | 61 | finger | 46 |
| and | 575 | of | 101 | now | 59 | big | 45 |
| you | 430 | we | 101 | fly | 58 | got | 45 |
| i | 421 | are | 97 | when | 56 | as | 45 |
| to | 303 | that | 95 | can | 55 | goofy | 45 |
| in | 294 | for | 93 | have | 54 | through | 42 |
| my | 231 | see | 87 | put | 53 | away | 42 |
| your | 193 | down | 85 | like | 53 | no | 42 |
| me | 184 | up | 85 | two | 52 | play | 42 |
| little | 175 | oh | 83 | they | 52 | way | 41 |
| on | 161 | so | 79 | this | 52 | then | 41 |
| it | 137 | old | 77 | there | 51 | yes | 40 |
| go | 133 | what | 75 | it's | 51 | huh | 40 |
| one | 119 | come | 71 | if | 50 | out | 39 |
| do | 118 | here | 67 | hands | 47 | how | 39 |
| he | 115 | where | 66 | day | 46 | long | 37 |
| is | 114 | love | 64 | had | 46 | world | 37 |
| his | 109 | will | 64 | know | 46 | yum | 37 |
| all | 107 | good | 64 | e | 46 | too | 36 |

As shown in "Table I", the most frequently used part of speech is articles. 'the': 989 times; 'a': 614 times; conjunction, 'and': 575 times; preposition, 'to': 303 times and 'in': 294 times.

In the top 20 words with the highest frequency, after excluding articles, conjunctions, prepositions and other grammatical words, the rest are basically pronouns, and they are all personal pronouns.

Second, this paper analyzes the word frequency of 200 classical Chinese nursery rhymes by python, and outputs the most frequent 80 words in Chinese nursery rhymes, as shown in "Table II".

TABLE II.    THE TOP 80 HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS OF CHINESE NURSERY RHYMES

| word | freq | word | freq | word | freq | word | freq |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 的 | 542 | 也 | 56 | 又 | 36 | 会 | 26 |
| 我 | 378 | 把 | 54 | 说 | 35 | 宝贝 | 26 |
|  | 285 | 不 | 53 | 去 | 35 | 向 | 26 |
| 啦 | 239 | 着 | 51 | 幸福 | 35 | 快快 | 25 |
| 你 | 232 | 上 | 51 | 当 | 34 | 大家 | 25 |
| 呀 | 208 | 叫 | 50 | 快乐 | 34 | 家 | 25 |
| 在 | 152 | 老师 | 50 | 里 | 33 | 阳光 | 24 |
| 我们 | 132 | 跳 | 50 | 和 | 33 | 儿 | 24 |
| 了 | 119 | 美丽 | 48 | 给 | 33 | 童年 | 24 |
| 是 | 117 | 要 | 44 | 摇 | 32 | 格 | 24 |
| 小 | 113 | 一个 | 43 | 亲亲 | 32 | 手 | 23 |
| 妈妈 | 100 | 多 | 42 | 到 | 31 | 哪里 | 23 |
| 来 | 96 | 哩 | 42 | 做 | 31 | 轻轻 | 23 |
| 有 | 79 | 那 | 41 | 让 | 30 | 听 | 23 |
| 就 | 74 | 像 | 40 | 它 | 29 | 兵 | 23 |
| 啊 | 74 | 他 | 39 | 世界 | 28 | 小手 | 23 |
| 都 | 73 | 大 | 38 | 宝宝 | 28 | 呷 | 23 |
| 好 | 67 | 小小 | 38 | 一起 | 27 | 真 | 22 |
| 爱 | 63 | 什么 | 38 | 春天 | 27 | 眼睛 | 22 |
| 爸爸 | 62 | 喵 | 38 | 没有 | 26 | 太阳 | 22 |

As shown in "Table II", the most frequently used part of speech is auxiliary word. '的': 542 times. '啦': 239 times. '呀': 208 times. '了': 119 times.

In the top 20 words with the highest frequency, if these auxiliary words are excluded, they are mainly pronouns, verbs, nouns and a small number of adjectives.

Third, this paper conducts comparative analysis, compares and analyzes the two groups of data in "Table I" and "Table II", and gets "Table III", as shown in the following "Table III".

TABLE III.    FREQUENCY STATISTICS OF ENGLISH AND CHINESE NURSERY RHYMES

| | **English children's songs** | **Chinese children's songs** |
|---|---|---|
| The most commonly used parts of speech | article | auxiliary word |
| Top three pronouns in common use | You>I>my | '我'>'你'>'我们'<br>('I' >'You '>'we') |
| The most commonly used adjectives | 'little' | '小'('little') |
| The most commonly used action verbs | 'go' | '来'('come') |
| The most commonly used pronouns | 'you' | '我'('I') |
| Favorite color | 'blue' | '七彩'('Colorful') |
| Favorite fruit | 'apple' | '萝卜'(' radish) |
| Favorite facial features | 'hand' | '手'('hand') |
| Favorite numerals | 'one' | '一个'('one') |
| Favorite season | no | '春天'('spring') |
| 'mom ': 'Dad' | 1.2: 1 | 1.6: 1 |
| 'occupation' | 0 | 'teacher ' |
| 'patriotism' | 0 | "Patriotic" |
| 'religion ' | 0 | 0 |

## III.    CONCLUSION

Generally speaking, the lyrics of English and Chinese children's songs are the most similar. First, they all like to use pronouns, especially personal pronouns. The main audience of children's songs is 2-8-year-old children. They are in the objective period of building self-awareness and developing cognitive ability. American psychologist Gordon Willard Allport divides the development of people's self-consciousness into three stages: the self-centered period before three years old, the objective period from three to twelve years old, and the subjective period after twelve years old. Through the happy and catchy teaching method of children's songs, we can better help children gradually form self-consciousness, understand the differences and connections between themselves and the group. Second, most of the words in children's songs of the two are pronouns, nouns and verbs that reflect common sense of life or learning. They cultivate close emotional ties with their parents and nourish positive social emotions. Third, they are basically not related to local characteristics and religious words.

In the international education, we should carry out education and promotion according to these characteristics of English children's songs and Chinese children's songs. First of all, through "Table III" above, we can intuitively understand the cultural and writing differences between Chinese and English language families represented by Chinese nursery rhymes and English nursery rhymes. Then, memorizing the high-frequency words in "Table I" and "Table II" helps us learn and recite the 400 Chinese and English nursery rhymes quickly. Finally, the most important thing is that the essence of children's songs is to serve as a national and cultural heritage tool, responsible for the cultural enlightenment of young groups, so it is essential to learn and understand Chinese and English culture while educating and promoting Chinese and English nursery rhymes.

## *References*

[1] Mike Norris, Minnie Adkins. Mommy Goose[M].The University Press of Kentucky, 2016.

[2] Jin Xiaoxia. A review of the development of Chinese children's songs in the past century [J]. Music time and space, 2014-06: 105-106.

[3] Hou Jie, Chang Chunbo. The aria of daily life: Enlightenment of children's gender consciousness in modern times—Centered on children's songs in the early 20th century [J]. Nankai Journal(Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2018-07: 45-54.

[4] Judith Mc Lean;Sally Chance.The Dance of Life[M].Springer International Publishing, 2019.

[5] Jean F. Andrews;Sharon Baker. ASL Nursery Rhymes: Exploring a Support for Early Language and Emergent Literacy Skills for Signing Deaf Children[J].Sign Language Studies, 2019-12.

[6] Zheng Weibin, Li Nafi. On the idea and path of integrating nursery rhymes into children's cognitive education [J]. Journal of Minnan Normal University(Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2020-03.

[7] Shi chunrang. Reappear children's interest—The essence of children's songs translation [J]. Journal of Shaanxi Preschool Normal University, 2018.

[8] Feng Lijun. On the interpersonal communication of nursery rhymes — Take the nursery rhymes of Chaoshan dialect as an example [J]. Journal of Baicheng Normal University, 2018-07.

[9] Liang Yingya. Hailufeng Nursery Rhymes from the perspective of folk customs [J]. Journal of Qingdao Agricultural University(Social Sciences), 2015-11.