

A Study on Constructing Historical and Cultural Textbooks for Hualien Sugar Factory, Taiwan -Based on Local Stories

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is employing literature review, in-depth interviews, and the KJ method to uncover early stories of Hualien Sugar Factory, Taiwan through interviews with elders, categorizing the stories and analyzing their distinctiveness, and adapting and constructing them as historical and cultural textbooks for guided tours. For the result of this study, early local stories can be grouped into seven categories - stories from sugarcane fields, memories of life on sugar factory premises, memories at Dajin Elementary School, life outside the factory, life before and after the war, accidents and death of family, and employees of different identities.

Keywords: Hualien Sugar Factory, Guangfu Sugar Factory, Historical and Cultural Stories of Hualien Sugar Factory, KJ method

Introduction

A. Background and Motivation

Hualien Sugar Factory was one of the major sugar factories in east Taiwan. After ceasing production in 2002, the facilities transitioned into a tourism factory. Active measures have been made in recent years to generate tourism assets around the facilities (the official website of Hualien Sugar Factory, 2018), along with green landscaping to create a leisurely environment. Geographically, Hualien Sugar Factory is located in the central region of Hualien County. It is a tourism hub of the entire East Rift Valley, with more than 600 thousand visitors every year. The ice shop of the sugar factory and the surrounding shopping streets are the main source of revenue (Liang, 2018). However, it is a major current objective for Hualien Sugar Factory to entice visitors at the sugar factory to lengthen their stay beyond enjoying ice cream, connect the sugar industry with local culture, and present stories of the sugar factory, thus highlighting the cultural value of the sugar factory, promoting the rich history of the facilities, and passing on collective memories. Therefore, uncovering stories and values of the old sugar factory and editing them into historical and cultural textbooks for guided tours, so as to achieve sustainability and advancement of the cultural assets of the sugar factory has become an integral part of current efforts at the facilities. Figure 1 shows the location of Hualien Sugar Factory.



Fig. 1 Location of Hualien Sugar Factory

B. Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the present study.

1. Investigating the historical and cultural stories of Hualien Sugar Factory, Taiwan.
2. Categorizing the historical and cultural stories of Hualien Sugar Factory, Taiwan.
3. Providing the historical and cultural stories as the basis data for guided tours textbooks of Hualien Sugar Factory, Taiwan, based on early local stories.

Methodology

The research methods used in this study were literature review, in-depth interviews, and KJ method. First, literature review and data collection were conducted on the cultural history and current development of Hualien Sugar Factory. Local stories about the sugar factory were extracted from in-depth interviews with elders. Records of the interviews were analyzed and adapted into historical and cultural textbooks about the sugar factory. The field interviews of the present study were conducted from January 30 to 31, February 6, 8 to 9, 15, and March 8 to 9, 2018. Lastly, the KJ method was used to categorize historical and cultural textbooks and discuss their distinctiveness for reference by the sugar factory management regarding guided tours and other related purposes. Table 1 below shows the profile information on the 15 interviewees for the study.

TABLE 1
 PROFILE INFORMATION ON THE 15 INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee Number	Location of Residence	Year of Birth	Date of Interview	Background
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A	Dafu Village, Guangfu Township	1951	January 30 and February 8, 2018	Current Executive Secretary of Dafu Community. Helped remove sugarcane leaves and carry sugarcanes in the field since third grade because her mother worked at the sugar factory.
B	Dafu Village, Guangfu Township	1919	January 30 and February 8, 2018	100-year-old lady. Married and moved to Dafu, Guangfu Township when she was 18 and worked at the sugar factory, did laundry for soldiers, and sold miscellaneous goods at the train station.
C	Changchiau Village, Fonglin Township	1958	January 30, 2018	Senior employee at Hualien Sugar Factory. Born, raised, and employed on the sugar factory premises. Began working at 15. He worked in the electrical engineering department until the sugar factory ceased operations in 2002, after which he worked in the Million convenience store on factory premises and currently works as a groundskeeper at Chung Yuan Ranch.
D	Darung Village, Fonglin Township	1957	January 31, 2018	Retired from Hualien Sugar Factory. His father also worked at the sugar factory. He grew up in the Danong Ranch dormitory and the East Dormitory of the sugar factory.
E	Juimei Village, Juisui Township	1954	February 6, 2018	Currently works as a temple keeper at Chinglien Temple, Juisui Township. Her father worked at the ranch department of the sugar factory. She grew up in a dormitory of the sugar factory and worked as temporary staff in the office of Dafu Ranch before she was married.
F	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1957	February 8, 2018	Senior employee of Hualien Sugar Factory; collects many old photos of the sugar factory.
G	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1963	February 8, 2018	Senior employee of Hualien Sugar Factory and Managing Director of Dajin Community.
H	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1941	February 8, 2018	Worked as temporary staff at the sugar factory at 18 after military service in 1964. Later, he passed an exam and became a full-time employee. He served in many departments.
I	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1946	February 8, 2018	Began working at the sugar factory at 18 and retired at 65 in 2011. He worked as temporary labor at the sugar factory for 37 years.
J	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1933	February 8, 2018	Worked at Shoufeng Sugar Factory and Guangfu Sugar Factory (Hualien Sugar Factory).
K	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1943	February 8, 2018	Worked as temporary staff at the sugar factory. Duties included peeling sugarcanes.
L	Daan Village, Guangfu Township	1951	February 9, 2018	Born in the West Dormitory of the sugar factory. Has extensive knowledge about life at the sugar factory because his father worked in the transportation department of the sugar factory.
M	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1934	February 15, 2018	Worked as an employee of the sugar company at 15 in 1949 and transferred to the sugar factory as a groundskeeper for the residence of the factory manager at 17 in 1951.
N	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1935	March 8, 2018	Joined Guangfu Sugar Factory (Hualien Sugar Factory) by passing an exam at 18 in 1953 and worked in positions from intern to ranch managers and department directors.
O	Dajin Village, Guangfu Township	1960	March 9, 2018	Grew up in Dajin Community near the sugar factory. Though not a descendant of a sugar factory employee, he studied in Dajin Elementary School, an institution exclusive to descendants of a sugar factory employees, and thus had close connection with the sugar factory during childhood.

Table 1 above shows that among the 15 interviewees in this study, 14 had worked at Hualien Sugar Factory or as a ranch

employee. One of the interviewees had not worked at the sugar factory but had lived for a long period near the factory and was familiar with life at the factory. Therefore, all 15 interviewees were able to recount in detail their memories about the sugar

factory including the environments inside and around the factory premises as well as local stories surrounding history and culture.

Result and Discussion

By compiling, analyzing, categorizing, and restructuring early stories of the sugar factory based on interviews with the elders, the results of the present study are partitioned into two parts, “compilation and categorization of early local stories of Hualien Sugar Factory” and “categories and cluster relationships of stories of Hualien Sugar Factory,” as described in the following.

A. Compilation and categorization of early local stories of Hualien Sugar Factory

For the compilation and categorization of early local stories of Hualien Sugar Factory, “card recording” as the first phase of the KJ method (Yang, 2002) was conducted on the results of the in-depth interviews with the 15 interviewees listed in Table 1. Interviewee accounts were simplified and titled as 29 stories. The stories were then categorized based on their titles in a “grouping” process as the second phase of the KJ method. Stories with similar topics and features were consolidated into seven groups, as described in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
 LIST OF EARLY LOCAL STORIES OF HUALIEN SUGAR FACTORY, COMPILED AND CATEGORIZED

Story Category Number	Story Category	Story Topic Number	Story Topic	Interviewee Number as Source of Story
1	Stories from sugarcane fields	1	Peeling of sugarcanes and wounds on hands	A
		2	Childhood snacks in the sugarcane field: Hiding from supervisors and chewing sugarcanes	E, O
		3	Life as company employee and peddler	B
		4	Silliest job in the world and cheating	F, G
2	Memories of life on sugar factory premises	5	Taking the sugar factory’s shuttle bus to the movie theater	D, E
		6	Shared childhood memory: Going to a movie at the sugar factory’s theater	L, O
		7	Shared childhood memory: Hot baths that smelled like sugarcanes	E, H, I, J, L
		8	Being a student at Dajin Elementary School without parents working the sugar factory	O
		9	A recreational troupe comprising employees of the sugar factory	I, L
		10	History of the 366 Steam Locomotive	F, G
		11	Clinics and morgue of the sugar factory	D, L
		12	Uniforms starched and pressed with three ridges	L
		13	Hierarchy of dormitories in the sugar factory	F, G, J
3	Memories at Dajin Elementary School	14	Exclusive perks at Dajin Elementary School: Milk, sugar, and yeast candy	E
		15	Writing class at Dajin Elementary School: How to take care of sugarcanes	F, G
4	Life outside the factory	16	Glamorous lifestyles outside the factory	B, O
		17	Life of a soldier in Danong	E
		18	Old railway for transporting raw materials	H, N
5	Life before and after the war	19	Lack of medical resources in a small town	K
		20	Taking shelter from air raids and stealing sugar	M
		21	Hardship during the reconstruction of the sugar factory	H, J
		22	Military veterans and Guangfu New Village	F, G, H, J
6	Accidents and death of family	23	Deaths from workplace hazards and the low value of human life	J, N
		24	Sad reasons and opportunities for taking jobs: Survivor care from the sugar factory	J, N

7	Employees of different identities	25	Life after the sugar factory ceased operations	C
		26	Childhood part-time jobs on holidays	N
		27	How family of sugar factory employees made money	K
		28	Experiences in taking sugar factory employment exams	H
		29	Nickname for students of cooperative education – yitu (藝徒, disciples of craft)	J, N

B. categories and cluster relationships of stories of Hualien Sugar Factory

With (1) spatial distribution and (2) indicator diagrams of the third phase of the KJ method, namely affinity diagram (Yang, 2002), the seven story categories in Table 2 above were analyzed. The spatial distribution was based on instability-stability as the x-axis and poverty-affluence as the y-axis, and the groups of stories were assigned appropriate coordinates in the space, as shown in Figure 2 below.

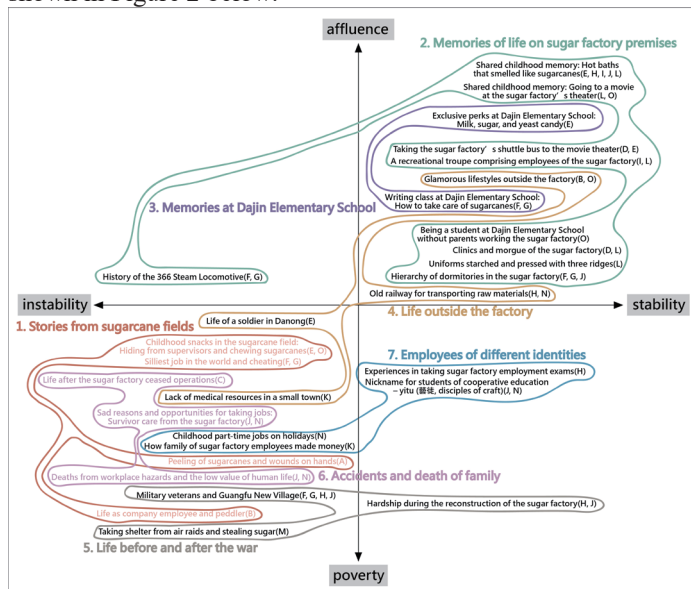


Fig. 2 Diagram of categorization and cluster relationships among stories of Hualien Sugar Factory based on the KJ method

Conclusions

The following are the three conclusions derived from the results of this study.

1. In addition to Hualien Sugar Factory, the early sugar industry in Hualien also involved Shoufeng Sugar Factory, farms, ranches, and raw materials processing operations in an extensive and comprehensive system. However, as times change, the Hualien Sugar Factory no longer produces sugar but instead is dedicated to preserving the buildings and historical, cultural stories of the facilities and promoting tourism on the premises.
2. Early local stories of Hualien Sugar Factory are mainly “memories of life on sugar factory premises” and were perceived with stability and affluence, illustrating that despite the widespread hardship of the early days,

employees at the sugar factory were able to provide their children with access to facilities and privileges of the sugar factory. Conversely, among “stories from sugarcane fields”, every entry was perceived with poverty and instability, illustrating that children of workers in sugarcane fields endured more hardship and instability in life.

3. Early local stories can be adapted and constructed as historical and cultural textbooks for Hualien Sugar Factory and grouped into seven categories - stories from sugarcane fields, memories of life on sugar factory premises, memories at Dajin Elementary School, life outside the factory, life before and after the war, accidents and death of family, and employees of different identities.

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