

A STUDY OF A PRE-K BALANCED BILINGUAL PROGRAM IN TAIWAN

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2011

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To my parents who support me all the time

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am writing to express how much I appreciate many people's unforgettable support and help. When I felt frustrated and depressed on my doctoral journey, I always received encouragement from my committee, my colleagues, my friends, and my family, who supported me in various ways. I know without them and I would not have finished my journey.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my committee: Danling Fu, Dr. Linda Lamme, Dr. Ruth Mckoy Lowery, and Dr. Cynthia Chennault. Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Fu. She has been an understanding and supportive mentor since I started studying at the University of Florida in 2006. Her guidance, encouragement, support, kindness, and patience enabled me to think and act as a researcher and an instructor. She gave me an opportunity to teach Language Arts, which was one of most rewarding experiences and opened a door for me so I could see my professional growth.

In 2009, Dr. Fu visited my school in Taiwan. She gave me valuable feedback and suggestions on what I might study at my school. Dr. Fu helped me shape my research questions and revise my prospectus. We always had long discussions and unlimited revising during the writing of my dissertation. As an innovative writer, a dedicated researcher, an intelligent scholar, and a devoted educator, Dr. Fu is my model and I believe I will continue to feel her influence my whole life.

Secondly, Dr. Lamme is a great professor. I marvel at Dr. Lamme's high scholarly productivity, which urges me to work harder in the future. She inspired me to love children's literature, helping me learn how to study children's literature from a cultural perspective and peaking my interest in researching children's literature. Dr. Lamme's

enthusiastic attitude toward children's literature has mentally encouraged me to integrate children's literature into my future teaching and work.

I appreciate that Dr. Lowery kindly shared her opinions related to my study and gave me her notes and detailed feedback on my prospectus and dissertation. I also am deeply grateful to Dr. Lowery for supporting me when I taught children's literature in 2007. From her I gained a lot of practical skills in teaching children's literature.

I really extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Chennault who allowed me to sit with her in her office as together we worked through a Chinese translation of my research; this experience widened my vision of understanding on Chinese classic books. I won't forget when Dr. Chennault mailed me the hard-copy of my prospectus after my proposal defense; then I had her feedback in her hand-writing.

Also I really appreciate Dr. Behar-Horenstein who always gives her students positive hope, and I genuinely appreciate her fabulous encouragement and perceptive advice as I struggled to write my dissertation.

I worked in the School of Teaching and Learning at UF for five years. I also want to say many thanks to many people there. Of course, my great thanks to my great colleagues, Joanne Laframenta, Chu-Chuan Chiu, Qing Liu, Zhou Li, Juan Du, Feng Liu, Jiyoung Kim, He Huang, Vasa Buraphadeja, Hsiao-Yu Chang, Ya-Yu Cloudia Ho, Byeon, Seongah, Patricia Jacobs, Soim Shin, Pinky, and Tong Wong. They are appreciated far beyond words. I will remember them forever. Meanwhile, unlimited thanks must go to my study group members. We had a meeting every Friday afternoon. During my dissertation study, they listened to my presentations, discussed issues, addressed my concerns, and provided me with valuable feedback. I think they are really

great study group members. I sincerely thank to them. Also, over the five years, I do not remember how many times I asked for help in oral practice and writing revision from Dr. Laframenta who always welcomed me no matter how busy she was. Besides, I am deeply impressed by Dr. Liu, Feng Liu and Dr. Li, Zhou's solid work and strong self-discipline encouraged me to keep working. I am heartily thankful to Chu-Chuan and Qing, who always helped me at the last minute; I was very happy to have them keep me company and make this long journey not so lonely. Their persistent concern and emotional support are very important to me.

In addition, I sincerely appreciate The Natural Way School. Special thanks to Mr. Zang, the founder, who allowed me to observe in classrooms; interview students, teachers, and staff, and collect any data I needed. His support was very important for my study, too. Furthermore, I would like to thank Drs. Minta Napier and Marylou for their editing help. They really contributed to the final version of my dissertation work.

Finally, my heartily thanks go to my parents and my son, Yun-Chung. There are no words to express my appreciation for their unconditional love and support. I am very lucky to have them.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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December 2011

Chair: Danling Fu

Major: Curriculum and Instruction

In Taiwan, English education during early childhood is a debated national dilemma. Many Taiwanese parents send their young children to learn English in early childhood bilingual schools so they may benefit from a more positive self-image and, later in life, a better career (Shin, 2000; Lao, 2004). On the other hand, some scholars (Tsai, 2003; Chang, 2004) maintain it is inappropriate for young children to learn a foreign language, as they are not mature enough to have developed a cultural identity and a sophisticated understanding of how their native language works. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how a bilingual program in a non-English speaking country emphasizes the development of home culture and language.

Through an ethnographic case study approach, this study investigated how a school strives to eliminate the concerns and balance Chinese and English language learning in the early childhood bilingual program. By using a qualitative study, three questions were explored: (1) What is the educational philosophy of the Pre-K bilingual program of the Natural Way School in Taiwan? (2) How does the curriculum and instructional planning of the school demonstrate its balance in the Pre-K bilingual

program? (3) What are the perceptions about the program by students who have graduated and their parents?

The study triangulated multiple data, including interviewing the founder, teachers, administrators, parents, and students, and close observation of classrooms and artifacts. Through Wolcott's (1994) description-analysis-interpretation and Glaser and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative as data analysis strategies, the study presents how the Pre-K bilingual program employs Chinese culture including Chinese educational philosophy and Chinese literary traditions to balance the hegemony of English education in Taiwan.

The study found an emphasis on learning about Chinese culture in early childhood bilingual education can overcome the hegemony of English. The school not only develops bilingual education in a harmony with culturally independent educational ideas, but also educates the children for a globalized society.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As a language for global communication, English in non-English speaking countries has been considered an important tool within the world community. To promote internationalization, children around the world are required to learn English at an early age (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1997, 1999). For example, to promote globalization, the Korean government plans to revise English textbooks and curriculum to raise English language competence. In addition, in Malaysia, learning English is considered a way to strengthen its power as a nation (Mahathir Mohamed, *The Sun*, September 11, 1999, cited in Gill, 2002, p. 101). The Japanese are required to speak “Standard English,” and education has been reformed to develop global literacy skills, including a working knowledge of English for everyone. In 2000, the Singapore government launched a “Standard Good English Movement” (SGEM) nationwide for improved spoken English. In this era of internationalization and globalization, the governments of these Asian nations are devoting great efforts to improving English education across their respective countries.

As one of the “Four Asian Dragons” (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan), Taiwan has a highly developed economy which relies on international business and trade. As a small island invaded by outside forces and ideas for centuries, Taiwan’s economy, society, and culture have been greatly influenced by the outside world. To reach out and communicate with the international community, English in Taiwan has become a crucial language and an important tool for its economy and communication. In addition, Taiwan needs to make its nation more visible worldwide to

increase its economic growth and political power and to be internationally recognized on its own merits.

By the turn of the millennium, based on the desire of the general public, the Taiwanese government decided to increase its nation's English proficiency as the first step toward internationalization. Since approximately 2000, a substantial increase in the number of Taiwanese learning English has taken place at different levels. In 2001, to meet this public demand, the Ministry of Education (MOE) made studying the English language a required subject in all elementary schools, starting at Grade 3, with three major learning objectives (Wang, 2003):

- To develop in students from Grades 3 to 9 an international perspective through English education during their integrated education
- To maximize students' critical period of language acquisition in language learning
- To follow the trend of the new era and to fulfill public expectations

In Taiwan, parental expectations are highly respected and can heavily influence the decision of the Ministry of Education. Taiwanese people have extraordinarily high expectations for their children's English learning. They believe that their children's English proficiency represents their education level. A student with low English proficiency is seen by the public as less well educated with limited knowledge and competence. Furthermore, many Taiwanese people want their children to learn English at a young age so they can become proficient in English to compete for competitive jobs nationally and internationally. Therefore, to give their children a head start, many parents send their children to study English in private bilingual programs before their formal education begins.

To meet this social demand, more and more private schools have established preschool bilingual programs. However, with large numbers of children beginning their English learning at this young age, many scholars and educators in the field of language acquisition and child development have raised concerns about beginning English at such a young age. First, the opponents of preschool bilingual education doubt the suitability of teaching English to children before they have their fundamental education in their native language (Hansen, 2003). They also voice concerns about young children needing to fully develop their native language competence. Second, the opponents believe that language is a cultural artifact in which Taiwanese values, history, traditions, and beliefs are embedded (Mori, 2001). Learning a foreign language at a young age may therefore cause confusion in the children's cultural identity. Third, learning a second language at a young age may cause too much stress and anxiety in a child's psychological development. Fourth, some educators (Wang, 2003) have pointed out that preschools, kindergartens, and elementary schools in Taiwan currently are not ready to offer English as a required subject because they are lacking a well-developed curriculum and well-trained teachers in English instruction. These educators believe that without a good English language curriculum and with poor quality teaching, English instruction will create serious problems in the children's ability to learn English, in the form of poor pronunciation and inappropriate learning habits. These educators' concerns are in the forefront of the controversy of teaching English at a young age.

Another important issue is language policy (Chen, 2004; Crombie, 2006; Lin, 2006; Scott & Tiun, 2007). Language and cultural identity have always been a sensitive issue in Taiwan's history. Each political change has been connected with these issues.

In Taiwan, the Taiwanese dialects are considered diverse: Mandarin, Southern Min, Hakka, and nine aboriginal languages. In 2000, the Kuomintang (KMT), which had ruled the island for 55 years, lost the presidential election and had to turn over administration to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The KMT's nationalism and China-centered language policies came under serious attack and ethno-consciousness was awakened (Chen, 2000) causing the call for indigenization to become common. However, it is difficult for Taiwan to call for internationalization and indigenization simultaneously. Internationalization or globalization requires learning English and studying Western cultures. Indigenization looks to Taiwan's multicultural base. Thus, the dilemma for the Taiwanese government is how to implement both types of political goals regarding Taiwan and the West. While the process of internationalism and/or globalization is now rapidly developing, Taiwan's government is hesitant to carry out bilingual education. But bilingual education has been instigated in many private schools and language institutes. This undesirable situation has caused mixed reactions throughout the country.

Currently, struggles have arisen advocating that every Taiwanese citizen learn Chinese and English, as some people advocate that every Taiwan citizen learns enough English to become proficient bilingual and educated citizens in the global village. Regarding economic influence, the voice of internationalization is always raised and receives attention; however, the Taiwanese face a significant challenge to resolving the paradox of the hegemony of English and cultural identity in education (Chen, 2002). In most early childhood bilingual programs in Taiwan, English language dominates the education and Chinese is left to parents at home. Although the schools use the term "Chinese/English bilingual program," English education is stressed on all learning levels,

which includes English textbooks, English-teaching methods, English-learning contents, and English-speaking instructors (not Taiwanese). English is first priority in the bilingual program because the Taiwanese expect their children to become proficient in English. The hegemony of English inevitably happens everywhere. In Taiwan, English proficiency represents a person's education level and social economic status. Students in early childhood bilingual programs are required to study all subjects in English. This is the main reason that educators and scholars oppose English education in early childhood education. They are worried that learning English at a very young age will cause children to only value English. Simply stated, the problem faced by the Taiwanese is how to educate truly bilingual individuals who are proficient in their home language and have a strong home cultural identity as well as being competent in English.

Purpose and Research Questions

The dilemma between nationalization (national consciousness) and internationalization is a major problem for the government. However, in Taiwanese society, early childhood bilingual education is still debated. To consider educators' and scholars' concerns, advocates of bilingual education have found many ways in which bilingual programs try to deal with the dilemma (Chen, 2003). Thus, my study focused on how one particular school tries to solve the problems faced by the Taiwanese's dilemma. In other words, what kind of bilingual educational practice can be used to develop the Chinese language and cultural identity in young children, but still accommodate the children's learning of English? The purposes of this study therefore are to investigate how a Pre-K school balances a Chinese and English bilingual program, and how the balanced Pre-K bilingual program helps children to develop the

national language and cultural identity. To gain a deep understanding of this issue, I used one school as a case study to explore the aforementioned concerns and issues of bilingual education in Taiwan. My three research questions were as follows:

1. What is the educational philosophy of the Pre-K bilingual program of the Natural Way School in Taiwan?
2. How do the curriculum and instructional planning of the School demonstrate its balance in the Pre-K bilingual program?
3. What are the perceptions of the program by students who have graduated and their parents?

Research Methods

Epistemology is the “philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (Maynard, 1994, p.10). It is important to identify the epistemological stance for the research orientation. The epistemology of my case study is Constructionism because I believe meaning is never simply described as “objective” nor ‘subjective”, but is constructed on the object by the subject (Crotty, 2004). Based on “all meaning in context” (Merriam, 1998, p. 1), meaning is constructed by people interacting with the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 2004). A qualitative study hopes to “understand the phenomenon studied and draw its own interpretation about meaning and significance” (Patton, 2002, p. 10). Therefore, the study provided concrete descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of the school setting, students, teachers, curriculum, and documents to give a picture of bilingual education in the paradoxical context. My study presented with a “rich, ‘thick’ description” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29) to answer my three research questions. It was firmly grounded in the large amount of information through data collection from the case study which is an urban private school that has a range of students from ages 3 to 15

and most of the children come from affluent families. I chose the school, the Natural Way School, as my research case for three reasons: 1) the school has had a good reputation in the field of bilingual education; and 2) the school is known for its balanced curriculum and instructional planning; 3) I had worked at the school for nine years and knew its administrators and staff and could easily explore the learning environment.

Research methods included a pilot study, observation, interviewing and collection of all types of artifacts, such as teachers' notes, lesson plans, students' portfolios, textbooks, and school curriculum. I conducted analysis immediately after each observation and interview, and continued this analysis throughout the data collection process. I employed domain analysis (Glaser, 1992; Strauss, 1987) in the transcription of interviews. The description-interpretation method for document coding analysis described by Wolcott (1994) was used.

Significance of the Study

The study contributed to the current early childhood bilingual education of the first language (L1) and cultural identity development. Since Taiwan is a country representative of economic growth and political democratization and wants to have a visible position in the world (Tsao, 1998), English is considered the language of wider communication for providing access and receiving information around the world. Bilingual education is inevitable, and English, as a first foreign language, has obviously become the second *de facto* national language (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2007). Thus, the Taiwanese believe that their children learning Chinese and English simultaneously will enable the country to gain communicative advantages in a global society (Liou & Chen, 1998). However, learning a language is also cultural and ideological learning, and language is a cultural artifact in which cultural values, history, traditions, and beliefs are

embedded (Shannon 1995). Young children learning English in an English hegemony context with Western values is considered as inappropriate and damaging to the Chinese language and cultural identity. In Asia, many countries, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, and China, face the same problem where the national language and English learning conflict and impact upon cultural identity. This case study involved the early childhood bilingual education of a school which strives to balance the culture of the West and East, Chinese and English. Thus, the findings provide evidence of how a school can overcome English hegemony and damage to the cultural identity while emphasizing English education in non-English countries.

This study is therefore significant in demonstrating that the School, which conducts bilingual education, Chinese and English, has tried to solve the paradox of developing a national language and cultural identity while promoting a second language. In other words, this study explores how the Pre-K bilingual program of the Natural Way School has developed a balanced bilingual education and has overcome the hegemony of English.

Overall, this study focused on understanding how a Pre-K bilingual school, the Natural Way School, resolves the paradox of legitimizing the hegemony of English and develops a national language and cultural identity through its philosophy, curriculum and planning. It is crucial for Taiwan today because the Taiwanese government and the Taiwanese people both need to know how to prevent the hegemony of English to preserve their cultural identity and national language development. Moreover, the research findings can also be beneficial to countries such as Japan, South Korea, Hong

Kong, Thailand, China, Singapore, and Malaysia— indeed, any country in the entire non-English speaking world may share these issues.

Summary

When non-European countries make great effort to improve English education, the hegemony of English becomes an issue that makes people fear they will lose their national language and cultural identity. Taiwan, a small country, wants to develop national language and cultural identity and simultaneously improve English learning and promote internationalization and globalization. Therefore, bilingual education, a debated national dilemma, has been an important issue for discussion. Developing native language and cultural identity and offering English education at a very young age should be balanced in bilingual schools in order to prevent the hegemony of English context. Thus, many bilingual schools are striving to prevent the hegemony of English and develop cultural identity and national language in Taiwan. This study explored a Pre-K bilingual program and provided an in-depth look into bilingual practices in non-English countries, in order to aid teachers, parents, administrators, curriculum designers, and school policy makers who are interested in bilingual education, and are concerned about the first language development and cultural identity.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to explore an early childhood bilingual program at Nature Way School in Taiwan. In order to understand the context of the study, a review of related literature is presented in the following sections: (1) contemporary theories and practices of bilingual education; (2) the history of Chinese educational philosophy and its contemporary application in Taiwan; (3) relevant theories of language acquisition and culture learning; (4) theories of cultural identity in the second language acquisition; and (5) understanding of a country from a colonized to a multilingual and multicultural society. Each of these contributes significantly to a framework for understanding the Nature Way School's goal to help young children become bilingual while strengthening their sense of Chinese cultural identity.

Bilingual Education

Definition of Bilingual Education

Bilingual education involves learning two languages simultaneously through the design of curricula and instructional activities (Cummins 1977, Krashen, 1998). We can categorize bilingual education into two types; transitional bilingual education and maintenance bilingual education (Fishmans, 1976; Hornberger, 1991). Transitional bilingual education aims to shift the child from the home, minority language, to the dominant language majority language. Social and cultural assimilation into the language majority is the main purpose. In contrast, maintenance bilingual education endeavors to foster the equality between the first and second languages, strengthening the child's sense of cultural identity, and affirming the rights of an ethnic minority group in a nation. Furthermore, Otheguy and Otte (1980) make the distinction that subcategorizes

maintenance bilingual education into two purposes: static maintenance and developmental maintenance. Static maintenance involves maintaining language skills at the level of the child's entering school. On the other hand, developmental maintenance develops a student's home language skills to full proficiency and full biliteracy or literacy, which is referred to as Enrichment Bilingual Education for minority language children. Static maintenance attempts to prevent home language loss but not to increase skills in the first language. Developmental maintenance has "a goal of proficiency and literacy in the home language equal to English" (Otheguy & Otto, 1980, p.351). Maintenance bilingual education maintains the individual and group use of minority language, leading to cultural pluralism, and linguistic diversity (Vold, 1992).

Early Childhood Bilingual Education

Interest in early childhood bilingualism goes back at least three centuries, to bilingual schools in European. After World War II, the interest continued with various forms of bilingualism. However, at the same time, researchers started to discuss the problems of bilingualism, the relationship of bilingualism to school and society, and the use of a second language as medium of instruction (Escobedo, 1983). Two facets, language and culture in early children bilingual education, were discussed by researchers. For example, the development of language in early childhood bilingual education and the influence of culture on young children's learning began to be studied.

Leopold (1939) conducted one of the first investigations of bilingual acquisition in children. That researcher studied the bilingual acquisition of English and German in his own daughter. He found that as a bilingual learner was exposed to both languages during infancy, the learner seemed to link two languages into one system during original

language production periods; early language forms were characterized by free mixing. However, language production during mature periods seemed to reveal that the use of English and German grammatical forms was developing independently.

Padilla and Liebman's (1975) research involved a longitudinal analysis of Spanish-English acquisition in 2-3 year-old bilingual children. Children had linguistic interaction over a five-month period. They reported that there is the differentiation of linguistic systems at a phonological, lexical, and syntactic level; yet, the proper use of both languages was evidenced and correct word order was preserved later.

Moreover, in a cross-sectional comparison of monolingual (English) and bilingual (Spanish-English) children (3-6 years old), by Carrow (1972) demonstrated a positive developmental trend. Bilingual children 3-6 years old had scores lower than monolingual children on English measures at the beginning of learning (3 years old), but in the final age comparison group (6 years old). Eventually, bilinguals and monolinguals did not differ significantly on English measures.

The combined results reveal that early childhood bilingualism is developed independently. Children can acquire more than one language during early childhood. Bilingual children may lag behind monolingual children at the beginning of language acquisition, but eventually bilingual children can catch up. It means that the acquisition of two languages does not impede the acquisition of either language. Although some children may very well develop an 'interlanguage' in a mixed utterance (Garcia, 1982 & Huerta, 1977), later on, they can acquire two independent language systems. Overall, there is no difference in the first language acquisition between the bilingual children and monolingual children.

The impact of culture on early childhood bilingual education has been of interest to educators and scholars (Jackson, S. & Espino, L., 1979; Escobedo, T., 1983; Contreras, G., 1979). Research addressed some issues such as “What cultural variables can determine children’s behavior?” or “How can cultural learning be incorporated into bilingual classrooms?”

The definition of culture from perspective of bilingual researcher, Brooks (1973), is “the distinctive life-way of a people, whether tribesmen, townsmen or urbanites, who are united by a common language” (p.3). In other words, culture is a learned habit of a distinctive life way. He divides culture into two categories: ‘surface culture’ and ‘deep culture’. Surface culture refers to “consisting of the products of artistic endeavor” (p.4), its elements are concrete and can be presented in a classroom situation. It includes such items as language, songs dances, arts and crafts, foods, holidays, and history. Deep culture refers to “the thoughts and beliefs and actions, the concerns and hopes and worries, the personal values, the minor vanities and the half serious superstitions, the subtle gradations of interpersonal relationships as expressed in actions and words, the day-by-day details of life as it is lived” (p.4). Its elements are feelings and attitudes toward various matters.

Carlisle (1971) and Gaardr (1965) support cultural understanding as a priority of bilingual education. However, historically bilingual education practice has been mono-cultural or culturally exclusive. Harold (1974) blames that the schools for failing to make systematic terms for the language, heritage, values, and learning styles of cultural groups. Gonzalez (1971) reaffirms that self-concept is a determining factor in a child’s cognitive development. He (1974) concluded that culture and personality are essentially

united and that self-concept, motivation, and positive cognitive behavior are grounded in childhood experiences. Thus, in practice, he (1974) supports incorporating cultural content into all subject areas in bilingual education. In summary, bilingual programs are bilingual and bicultural. They do not only teach the second language and maintain the first language, but also have cultural component and course contents present culture learning.

Overall, the research addresses important questions in the areas of language and culture related to children in bilingual programs. The existing literature establishes the framework on language and culture research at early childhood bilingual education, and provides information according to prior research and practice, which can give us a lens to investigate current early children bilingual education.

Review of General Studies of Bilingual Education

According to Brisk & Harrington's (2007) review of bilingual research conducted on Bilingual Education over the last three decades, the focus has been on three areas: (1) the linguistic aspect: (Padilla & Liebman, 1975; Garcia & Gonzalez, 1984; Garcia, 1986; Hakuta & Snow, 1986); (2) the cognitive aspect (Lanco-Worral, 1972; Cummins, 1979, 1981, 1984; Kessler and Quinn, 1986); (3) the social/communicative aspect (Hymes, 1974; Hailday, 1975; Ginishi, 1981; Ramirez, 1985; Zentella, 1981; Garcia, 1983, 1986, 1988; Garcia & Carrasco, 1981; Moll, 1988). It should be noted that a majority of the studies of bilingual theory, educational practice, and educational policy were focused on the English proficiency of students. There has been less systematic research available about the native language (L1) acquisition of children who are acquiring more than one language during early childhood.

Linguistic Studies of Bilingual Education

Padilla and Liebman (1975) point out that bilingual education may develop two languages equally or not. In other words, one language may lag behind, race ahead, or develop equally with the other language. Moreover, Garcia (1986) supports this point, finding that there is no quantitative or qualitative difference on morphological productions between bilingual students and monolingual students. However, Huerta (1977) argues that bilingual education may result in an Interlingua, incorporating the lexicon, morphology, and syntax of both languages at beginning stages. He found that languages may develop independently later. Overall, according to research from the linguistic perspective, bilingual education does not impede development of acquisition of either language.

Cognitive Studies of Bilingual Education

Linguistic flexibility can be related to a number of non-linguistic cognitive tasks such as categorization, verbal signal discrimination, and creativity (Brisk & Harring, 2007). Moreover, Peal & Lambert (1962) point out that bilingual children have more abilities than monolingual children, such as advantageous mental flexibility, superior concept formation, and a generally diversified mental ability. Lanco-Worral (1972) also finds that bilingual education can make children concentrate more on the meaning of words. Feldman and Shen (1971) discover that bilingual children not only score higher on specific Piagetian, metalinguistic, and concept-formation tasks, but also that these children have more strategies to solve problems. All of this research gives positive results for bilingual education. On the other hand, some researchers, Cummins (1979, 1981, and 1984), Padilla & Liebman (1975), and Diaz (1983) find that bilingual children have lower scores than monolingual children on standardized measures of

cognitive development, intelligence, and school achievement. These researchers indicate a less than positive result. In conclusion, it appears that the results in terms of cognitive development still remain tentative.

Social Studies of Bilingual Education

Social research about bilingual education has found that the results of bilingual education not only have linguistic and cognitive characteristics but also a social aspect. Especially, in early childhood bilingual education, social development takes on more consideration than linguistic and cognitive because children's surrounding environment and social communications influence learning behaviors (Garcia, 1983, 1986, 1988). Zentella (1981) founds that children make the decision to use their best language with their peers. Ginishi (1981) also argues that students use a language based on their previous language-use history with their fellow students. In other words, social contexts and environment influence students in bilingual program to make choices of language. Moreover, Garcia & Carrasco (1983) stress that children choose a language to use depending upon the language that their mothers were using to initiate the interaction. Overall, social interaction is critical element for children to determine language usage such as the intimacy of the mother, which will influence children to use a particular language.

In understanding the essence of bilingual education, it is impossible to ignore any of the elements as we discuss research of bilingual education. As Garcia (1983) points out "... cognitive processing factors may act to influence linguistic and social development and linguistic development may act to influence social and potential cognitive functioning. In turn, the development of social competence influences directly the acquisition of linguistic and cognitive repertoires (p. 106-107)." It is agreed that

linguistic, cognitive, and social development are interrelated in bilingual education. In other words, changes in one of these elements will contribute to changes in others. This may transform the result of bilingual education. Interestingly, in the recent research has not determined that if cultural identity is emphasized, what changes may take place in the linguistic and cognitive aspects of that bilingual education.

International Perspectives on Bilingual Education

In the USA, bilingual education was born in the 1960. The Canadian bilingual education movement began with an experimental kindergarten class in St. Lambert, Montreal, in 1965. However, the historical origins of bilingual education predate this century. Lewis (1977, 1981) discusses the history of bilingualism and bilingual education, and provides a picture about bilingual education from the Ancient World through the Renaissance to the modern world.

Around the world, bilingualism is more the norm than the exception. In Europe, bilingual education has been highly value. For instance, throughout the Roman Empire, formal schooling was widely available and all students were educated in Latin, regardless of their first language. Even now, Latin as the language of schooling is still maintained. In Asia, because English was historically a colonial language, the citizens of many countries speak English in addition to the national language officially recognized by the government. Although there is also bilingualism in Asia, bilingualism is due to the presence of minority language.

Actually, bilingualism has become common in almost every corner of the world. A number of countries are officially bilingual or multilingual, including Canada, Belgium, Finland, Cyprus, Israel, and Ireland. In these countries, more than one language may be used in transactions with the government or in the schools. Although different policies

have developed in some countries with respect to the language officially approved, people consider bilingual education an absolute necessity for business success. Thus, bilingual education has become a practical reality. The following provides an overview of worldwide bilingual education.

Canada has been officially bilingual (English and French) since 1967. Canada not only provides a notable success with its French-English immersion programs for English speakers, but also has been a model for dual language instruction. Some bilingual education instructional programs have been established with the aim of transitioning children from their primary languages to English, while others have the purpose of preserving proficiency in their heritage language.

Bilingual education programs in Europe (Brisk & Harrington, 2007) also have a good reputation for promoting scholastic achievement, linguistic equity, and even multilingual proficiency and multicultural awareness. Students' national, cultural, and linguistic identity is maintained through solid first language instruction and a variety of courses are offered in different languages so that students become bilingual or even multilingual.

Immigrant Bilingual Education

Sweden has a large portion of immigrants approximately 12 percent of the population (Boyd, 1999). The immigrants do well in maintaining their home language through bilingual education. In most European countries, bilingual or multilingual educations attempts are made to maintain the child's first language and cultural identity. At the same time, it strives to promote a national identity through instruction in at least two languages, compulsory learning of a third language through subject matter, and options regarding a fourth language (Beardsmore 1995, 28).

In the United States, a monolingual education using English was the dominant mode of the 19th century. However, in the beginning of the 20th century, some changes in attitude toward bilingualism and bilingual education occurred. A fear of new foreigners, an “Americanization” movement arose, which called for the integration, harmonization, and assimilation of immigrants. Moreover, English competence was deemed a mark of loyalty to the United States, and the immigrants’ lack of English language and literacy was identified as a social, political, and, economic concern. Proposition 227, a policy for new immigrants, was passed in California. Its intention was to educate limited English proficiency students in a rapid, one-year program. The bilingual education programs were replaced by the structured English Immersion models which were assimilation over multiculturalism. All well-implemented bilingual education programs should be aligned with the standards of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). Moreover, all bilingual programs should comply with Federal and State requirements, in order for English Language Learners (ELL) to progress in English development and good academic achievement in English. Thus, transitional bilingual programs are the most common bilingual programs in the United States, the goal of which is to develop students’ proficiency in English. The first language of immigrant students is used for instructional support until students have reached satisfactory levels of English proficiency. These students are finally expected to move out of a transitional program when they are capable of functioning in an English-only classroom.

On the other hand, in 1988, the California Association for Bilingual Education published a report (Vold.1992), “Bilingual Education’s Success in California” (Krashen &

Biber, 1988), which argued that a strong base in a first language facilitates second language acquisition. This supported home language and culture for building students' self-esteem and enhancing their achievement (Hakuta & Could, 1987; Cummins 1996). Language maintenance programs are pluralistic, which promote bilingualism and biliteracy for language minority students.

Many American scholars argue that maintenance programs may be the most effective means for promoting the English language skill of limited English proficiency students. They recognize that language ability and skill learned in a student's first language can transfer to second-language learning (Cummins 1996). However, in fact, most bilingual education programs are transitional programs that serve ELLs who are minority in culture and language learning. The purpose of bilingual education for ELLs in the United States remains English development and academic achievement.

Overall, it appears that in the United States, when people consider individual bilingualism in the cases of persons such as scholars, and diplomats, they believe this to be a worthy accomplishment and people appreciate being bilingual; however, when politically conservative people consider the bilingualism of an ethnic group, they see bilinguals as a disparate group. Certain political factions appear to sneer at group bilinguals and insist that immigrants give up their first language as part of their "Americanization." Whether or not to allow immigrants to maintain their language and own distinguishable identity or to encourage them to become assimilative Americans is a political issue.

Post- Colonial Bilingual Education

In Latin American countries, such as Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Argentina, bilingual education has established Spanish as the language common to the entire

national-wide territory. Mexico uses bilingual policies of maintenance and development, which consolidates mastery of the students' mother tongue with the simultaneous adoption of the second language, Spanish (Mexican Federal Education Law of 1973). Therefore, bilingual education would be carried out in two languages and the development of two languages.

Bilingual schools in Latin America have developed various structures. For example, in Argentina, bilingual schools allocate 50 percent of the time to Spanish and 50 percent to English from kindergarten through fifth grade. In Mexico, secondary-school instruction is in both Spanish and English for six years. This is considerably more demanding than an all-English upper-grade program. In Colombia, students of bilingual schools study content area subjects in English using textbooks from the United States and also follow the Spanish curriculum required by the government; at the same time, students also are taught language arts and social studies, including Colombian history and government, in Spanish.

Countries such as India, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, were ruled in the past by the British or Japanese empires. Bilingual or multilingual education was common during those periods. Today, in India, 14 languages plus English are officially recognized in the constitution. Bilingual or multilingual education is taught by the educated elite. People generally speak more than one language and may well have oral proficiency in as many as five or six. As one researcher comments, "in spite of mass illiteracy, a societal type of bilingualism/ multilingualism... has become the life and blood of India's verbal repertoire" (Sridhar, 1993).

Before 1997, Hong Kong was bilingual in English and Chinese. However, since the return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule in that year, the Chinese government decided that Chinese should replace English as the language of instruction in schools. Although English is not the official language, it is still considered an absolute necessity for business success. Thus, bilingual education still flourishes in private schools from preschool to college. In Taiwan, early childhood bilingual childhood education is prohibited by the Taiwan Government in public school settings, but private bilingual schools are very popular and profitable in Taiwan. Most Taiwan students learn English as a second language from grade three of elementary to college (Chapter 4). The bilingual preschool described in this study is a private school.

Bilingual Education In Practice

When discussing bilingual education in practice, it is important to understand and distinguish between bilingual programs that are additive bilingualism or subtractive bilingualism. Additive bilingualism occurs when a second language and culture are acquired with little or no pressure to replace or reduce the first language; it refers to a positive cognitive outcome from being bilingual. On the other hand, subtractive bilingualism occurs when the second language and culture are acquired with pressure to replace and dominate the first language and culture.

In additive bilingualism, language minority members or language learners are proficient in both languages and have positive attitudes toward plural cultures. For example, bilingual education in Canada allows English-speaking children to study French and English from kindergarten through sixth grade. They are first immersed in French only and later around the second grade, begin to develop literacy in English. By the end of sixth grade, the children are bilingual and biliterate (Cloud, Genesee, and

Hamayan 2000). In other words, additive bilingualism means a language is added, and the student will not lose the first language and has a positive cultural identity and self-concept at a social level. Conversely, in subtractive bilingualism, language minority members or language learners will lose their first language and have a negative attitude to the first language. For example, Early Exit bilingual education in the United States, allows ELL students to use the first language at the early years of their education; however, students are exited as soon as they show enough ability in English to pass Basic English proficiency standards. The purpose of this bilingual education is for English language development and academic achievement in English. Such, subtractive bilingualism means a learner's first language will gradually diminish in use, and positive self-concept and cultural identity decrease at a social level.

However, there are different types of bilingual education which are distinguished by curriculum design and language teaching methods. First of all, dual language is very popular in New York City. This means the use of the two languages are balanced close to 50%-50%. According to Ruiz (1984), dual language programs are considered a "language-as-resource" orientation that sees language other than English as a resource to be developed rather than a problem to be overcome. It is a developmental program that employs bilingual enrichment. Ruiz (1984) points out that the most effective model of instruction for learning of English is dual language education. In a dual language program, students develop high levels of proficiency in their first and their second language, they achieve above grade level on academic performance measure, and they demonstrate positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors (Howard and Christian 2002; Thomas and Collier 2002).

Immersion programs in bilingual education were conducted in Canada for a while. There are two types of immersion programs, structured immersion and enriched immersion. The purpose of structured immersion, a one-way bilingual program, is to help minority language learners acquire the majority language; therefore, bilingual learners are taught the majority language. In practice, this program provides content-area instruction through the native language and ESL instruction for one to three years; then it integrates all subjects into all target-language instruction. On the other hand, the purpose of enriched immersion, a two-way bilingual program, is to acquire two languages with initial emphasis on L2; thus, native speakers are taught content through the second language but the native language is introduced later. The goals of TWI programs are for all students to become bilingual and biliterate and achieve academically through both languages (Christian 1994; Cloud et al. 2000; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Although students receive instruction in English, the first language is still maintained and developed. Finally, students become bilingual and biliterate (Christian, 1994).

A Brief of Chinese Education and Chinese Educational Philosophy

Chinese education had a long history from the Xia, Shang, and Zhou 3000/4000 years ago. At that time, a schooling education system had already been established by the Imperial Court (Government). This type of school was “Guan Xue” (Government School/Education) which is controlled by the Imperial Court. All students were aristocrats and high-ranking officials. On the other hand, Confucius born in 551 B.C., the famous scholar, educator, philosopher, broke the rule of “Xue Zai Guan Fu (learning at the government hall). He encouraged “learning for all hierarchical levels and for all ages (Confucius’ Analects)”. Confucius opened the door of education to the any people

who are interested in learning. He established his own school and started to spread his ideas, thoughts, and views. He became the earliest founder for “private education”. This type of private school/education is known as ‘Si Xue’ (private institution). Later, ‘Si Xue’ develops and becomes private education system known as ‘Si Shu’. These ‘Si Shu’ are primary school for ordinary folks.

Government School and Private School formed the two systems for ancient Chinese education. From Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) till Qing (1644-1912) Dynasty, the formation of government institution had been well-established. All the teaching material and educational training and preparation were for Imperial Examination. After receiving a title in the Imperial Examination, one would receive a position in the bureaucracy. All Government School and Private School only have one purpose which is for preparing for Imperial Examinations. Private School, ‘Si Shu’, is generally more liberal in teaching, but most of them are still hard to avoid this intension ‘Imperial Examination’. Imperial Examination, the only value, influences Chinese education system.

The teaching materials in Private School, Si Shu, from Ming Dynasty, Qi Dynasty were not changed too much, and the beginning of Republic Of China found in 1911 still followed the system and teaching materials such as *Three Words Classics* (San Zi Jing), *Family Surnames* (Bai Jia Xing), *Thousand Characters Writing* (Qian Zi Wen), *Three Hundred Tang Dynasty Poems* (Tang Shi San Bai), and *Four Books and Five Classics* (Si Shu Wu Jing): Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, The Analects, Mencius, Classic of Poetry, Classic of History, Classic of Rite, Classic of Changes, and Spring & Autumn Annals. The essence of learning based on Confucius’ philosophy places a great

emphasis on humanity and culture education. It focuses on the teaching of morality and the development of wisdom. It covers philosophy, language, literature, history, discipline, nature, and culture.

Except for Imperial Examination, the essential purpose of Chinese education is to educate a person to become one of morality and wisdom, who can contribute his ability for people. Thus, teaching on knowledge comes later, but learning moral virtues such as loyalty, filial piety, respect elderly, hard-work, righteousness, study hard to become a moral one comes first. In the type of traditional 'Si Shu' the rules and regulations are extremely strict. Teachers are given absolute authority even there is some violation of rules such as "hitting the hands' and 'hitting the butts'.

The educational philosophy has a rich heritage from the traditional philosophers, Confucius, Mencius, Tsunzi, Zhu Xi, and so on. Their theories enhance understanding the relationships between people and nature, justice and self-discipline, and knowledge and action. The development of moral virtues is to pursue goodness and benevolence through everyday practice and self-development. According to Confucius, benevolence and etiquette are closely connected to each other. Sun (2011) indicates, "Benevolence determines etiquette. Psychological self-consciousness of benevolence functions, as the intrinsic essence of etiquette that reflects benevolence as its external manifestation and realizes benevolence in real life contexts (p.316). In other words, the rationale of traditional Chinese educational philosophy guides people to seek moral perfection in the real life that fulfill goodness and benevolence.

In a 2000-year educational history, Confucianism has been a broad and profound influenced on the national spirit, political ideas, moral concepts, value orientation and

the way the Chinese people think, especially, on education (Sun, M. 2011). However, there are two main influences on contemporary Chinese (Taiwan) education: classical Confucian philosophy and western educational philosophy. In modern Chinese (Taiwan), the first philosophy of education occurred in the 1920s and 1930s (Shenghong, J. and Dan, F., 2011). Also, in this period, the first influence coming from western philosophy of education, John Dewey's pragmatism had important inspiration and changes in scholars and practitioners. Dewey visited China (1911-1921) for two years at a very significant moment in Chinese history. Sue, Z. (2011) explains the attitude and changes of intellectuals during this period:

When the Opium War in 1842 revealed the decay and decline of the feudal dynasty and heightened its social crisis, many Chinese intellectuals recognized the need to learn Western science and technology to reform the old system of education, which was characterized by Confucian learning and imperial examination that emphasized memorization rather than reasoning. Once they rejected the past models, they were very eager to search for Western ideas that might be relevant to China (Su, Z., p.304).

Therefore, Taiwan's philosophy of education has long been relied on the foundational education support and under the shadow of the west. Moreover, in recent 20 years, many Taiwan scholars who studied in Western returned home and brought back new educational ideas and new ways of thinking, which provided broad scope for the rise of educational philosophies.

There were growing numbers of educators and scholars who tended to agree with Dewey and more Westernized elements gradually changed Chinese education. For example, bilingual educators in Taiwan who consider Chinese educational values from a Vygotskian perspective which is about language and thought development within influences of cultural and environmental interaction between children and adults. Current debate in Taiwan regarding bilingual education centers upon the hegemony of

western culture as embedded in English education and educators have become concerned with the immersing young children in Chinese cultural contexts while they are acquiring the first language and developing a second language. In other words, the relationship between language and culture has taken on increased importance.

Theories of Language and Culture

To define culture, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) said that it is “acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world, and thus with the history of the human spirit” (1869, p. 6). Philip Riley (2007) added more details to explain that culture is a product of human activity and effort and the sum of knowledge. It is accumulated, stored, and transmitted throughout history by human being. In the ‘anthropological sense’ of culture, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) declares: “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society (1897, p.1).”

Language is an important vehicle for expressing and presenting experiences, through which people of groups share their beliefs and construct their culture and custom. Fishman (1985) distinguishes three links between language and culture: “language as a part of culture; language as an index of culture; language as symbolic of culture (p.13).” He explains that language reveals the ways of thinking and organizing personal experiences, which are associated cultures. Kramsch (1998) also claims that “language expresses culture reality; language embodies cultural reality; language symbolizes cultural reality (p.3).” She uses a lens of a post-structuralist to see the relationship of between language and culture. She said

The words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect their author's attitudes and beliefs, their point of view . . . language expresses culture reality (Kramersch, 1998, p.3).

Therefore, language includes culture and culture includes language. Language and culture cannot be separated under most circumstances – human language is always embedded in culture (Byram, 2002). Language is a cultural and social tool. It assists individuals to grow as ethical beings and ultimately to effect discourse-change (Bakhtin, 1981; Gurevitch, 2000; Neelson, 1997). Language and culture are deemed closely related with each other. Indeed, language and culture have mutual consequential influence because language use presents as a form of social action (Austin, 1962, Searle 1969) in social contexts and events. Essential perceptions of culture include language usage and choice of language patterns.

Vygotsky's Cognitive Development of Children

Vygotsky theories link language and culture in terms of cognitive development. Because Vygotsky regarded language as a critical bridge between the sociocultural world and individual mental functioning, he viewed the acquisition of language as the most significant milestone in children's cognitive development (Berk & Winsler, 1995, p.12).

Three of Vygotsky's (1962) studies are regularly cited as providing the foundations for process-based model of children's learning they include his: (a) analysis of transformation from thoughts to language, (b) concept of learning as a socially constructed process, and (c) the zone of the proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky shows how thought is transformed into language. Language begins ego-central speech that is economical in words and hardly understood by others and between words and meaning. As egocentral speech develops as an inner speech, internalized speech, and finally become the closest form to thought. This is the form of pure meaning, or the most

abbreviated form of language. Eventually, thought is transformed into the communicative language --- thought in the conventional form. According to Vygotsky, thought is not just expressed by language, because it exists through language. Thought, meaning, and language are interrelated and interwoven into one form.

Vygotsky's analysis of the transformation from thought to language provides a foundation for the process-based learning model. His theorization of the learning process helps us to have a lens to observe and understand teaching in the classroom. Looking at students' oral expressions in the classroom, instructors can assist students to provide good models and help them communicate more clearly in language acquisition.

Language learning is a transforming process, and understanding the learning process is to make this transformation happen and complete. In his work, Vygotsky notes that learning occurs during interaction between adults and children in real contexts. Children make sense of the world they live in. They actively participate in the interaction and construction of the meaning through transforming "spontaneous concept" into "scientific concept," this is a process of transforming from lower functions to higher functions.

An understanding that learning is a socially constructed process promotes an explanation of how children learn in their natural life. According to Vygotsky, interaction not only invites children into learning activity but also provides space for their reflection on what they have received, which is the moment of internalization.

Bilingual First Language Acquisition

Bilingual first language acquisition (BFLA) is generally referred to learn two languages from birth (Genesee, F., & Nicoladis, E. 2006). There is evidence that Bilingual first language (BFL) learners might go through an initial monolingual stage (Leopold, W., 1949). The difference between bilingual first language acquisition and monolingual first language acquisition depends upon the development path and timeline of language development. In BEL learners resemble children learning only one language (DeHouwer, A., 1995). Bilingual first language learners and monolingual first language learners have the same process of the first language acquisition.

There are four different theories of first language acquisition. Each of them is based on researchers' studies. From traditional behaviorists' perspectives, language acquisition is simply a matter of imitation and habit formation (Skinner, 1957; Miller & Dollare, 1941). The process of acquisition can explain how some aspects of the language such as grammar, sentence-pattern, word meaning, and pronunciation are learned. However, the acquisition of language seems to depend on children's possession of some knowledge, allowing them to develop the language they hear (Chomsky, 1959). That is to say children imitate the sounds and sentence-patterns which they hear around them and receive positive reinforcement in their environment and society. In other words, children imitate and practice the patterns until they acquire the 'habits' of correct language use to communicate in interaction. According to the view, quality and quantity of the language the child hears, as well as the consistency of the reinforcement offered by adults in the environment, have important influences on the child's success in language acquisition. However, language acquisition is very complex. Language acquisition follows not only behaviorists' beliefs which are imitation/practice

and construct a grammar on the basis of biological structures (Chomsky, 1959), but language is also acquired from processing the language knowledge and encouraging children to express themselves interactively in real-life situation (McLaughlin, 1984).

The interaction between children and the world develops children language acquisition; meanwhile, children apply their development of language by relating what they already know to what they encounter. In other words, it means that language is the verbal way children express their understanding of the world (Piaget, 1983). Lindfors (1991) says that language is an important way for children to make sense out of the world and past experience, to learn from it, and to make it comprehensible, declaring that:

Language is inextricably entwined with our mental life --- our perceiving, our remembering, our attending, our comprehending, our thinking --- in short, all of our attempts to make sense of our experience in the world . . . (Lindfors, 1991, p.8).

Language is learned through enthusiastic interaction between the child and the environment. First language learning is a process of socialization (Vygotsky, 1987). Children must be exposed to language and able to interact with others. As children engage mutual interaction, they learn the world and knowledge. Children's interaction with others gives them meaning to relate language to the sound/meaning relationship.

Thus, children naturally acquire first language that helps them to express their needs and purposes. Children constantly adjust their spoken language with their guardians or people around them, in which children develop their ability to use first language and become more and more understanding of social situations and learn how to use words to express their thoughts. Lindfors (1991) asserts that language is purposeful and as children take part activities, they do so through language. In other

words, by listening and speaking, children can do self-corrections and imitation through the interaction in which they realize the extent of their knowledge of language structure. Interaction gives children an understanding of what they can comprehend. Lindfors (1991) strongly supports that children's play is one way for children to extend their language abilities; as well as it is where new words can be introduced and used in new ways. Children's play also allows children opportunities to express their point of view, solve problems, and convince peers to work together (Lindfors, 1991). The home and surrounding environment are important places in which children are provided mutual interactions or chances to imitate and practice language from parents and guardians with a high degree of success in communication. In other words, first language acquisition is essential to the way children communicate with others (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Lindfors, 1991).

Bilingual the First Culture Acquisition

Most research focuses on the process of culture learning as it accompanies language learning based on perspective of native culture. Cultural development as the way to think, feel, and believe, behave, and speak has been considered both in terms of the progress of the individual or development of the group throughout human history and contexts. Moreover, researchers claim that people utilize preferred language patterns to present their ideas, in which language choice, mixing, and alternation are shaped by individual and social ideologies (Austin, 1962). Searle (1969) also asserts that language changes and adapts to meet the needs of the language user who has concise forms of expression for object or concepts that exist in his/her culture and society (Searle, 1969). Therefore, because concepts, thoughts, and identities are

expressed through language, culture is concerned with language acquisition and socialization into a group (1897). This is a very important point about the relationship between first language and first language culture. This means that people develop culture identity and know to change and adapt their language patterns to meet their needs in the social contexts based upon the relationship between their first language and culture.

Thus, bilingual first culture learning is also like culture learning in which should be seen as a process, which finds value, right, and logic in one's own cultural pattern. Bilingual first language acquisition and native culture development acquisition are simply a specific type of human learning related to patterns of human communication and identification (Damen 1987). Although first language acquisition is taken for granted when children have enough of engagement and interaction with their contexts, the first culture learning in a bilingual education context becomes more complex. Basically, learning a first culture is a process of "indoctrination" (Damen, 1987, p.140) and enculturation leads to the construction of a sense of cultural identity. That involves a network of values and beliefs, patterned ways of living, choice of language usage, and beliefs in the power and the rightness of native ways. In addition, Damen (1987) elaborates that language learning and culture learning are mutually supporting and reinforcing, but the processes different from each other. Overall, bilingual first culture learning is a natural process where learners internalize the knowledge needed to function in a social group. However, bilingual learners develop self-awareness and consciously invoke the attitudes associated with another culture. They grow to be in charge of a conscious and purposeful process.

Bilingual Second Language Acquisition

Krashern (1988), Cummins, (1981), McLaughlin (1987) all claim important impressive theories of second language acquisition. The main of focus of a second language acquisition is that a second language acquisition have a certain level of awareness and operate at a conscious level, which is including emotion, motivation, comprehensible input language natural order, and, controlled and automatic processing mechanisms. McLaughlin defines automatic processing of second language acquisition is that the learners can manage many types of information simultaneously because certain sub-skills have become automatic operation in learns' brain. On the other hand, controlled processing of second language acquisition is conscious learning and gives learners certain forms of language to practice.

Generally, early childhood bilingual second language learners do not pay attention to the learning of forms or grammatical rules; instead; their focus is on communication of meaning and interaction, that process of acquisition is more close to the first language learning. Thus, as children acquire a new language, they demonstrate automatic processing. At the beginning, learners may not internalize instructors' explicit corrections because of their developing grammatical system; therefore, an instructor's modeling of proper sentences provides a plentiful input for students to use later in developing and monitoring accuracy in language usage.

Both McLaughlin and Krashen emphasize the importance of introducing authentic and contextually embedded language through meaningful activities, and the ultimate goal of using language is to communicate, and second language learning should focus more on meaning and not on form. While second language learners should be introduced to complexity of language structures, explicit teaching of forms should be

done at a peripheral level. In other words, as learners become engaged in activities that encourage them to use language in a purposeful and meaningful way, they will eventually learn the forms of the language.

Research in L2 acquisition (Cummins 1981) indicates that second language learners who are good in their native language tend to have a better understanding of grammar rules and a better concept of language learning.

Second language learning involves the assimilation of information into existing cognitive structure of the first language. Jim Cummins (1978) makes a distinction between social language and academic language within second language acquisition. He uses four quadrants for proper tasks and strategies to help ELLs at varying proficiency levels from social language to academic language. Cummins suggests that children in bilingual program must accomplish in order to avoid cognitive deficits (lower-level threshold) and to show advantages in cognitive development (higher-level threshold).

Although children in bilingual program have not accomplished varying proficiency levels of second language, they still can show advantages in cognitive development of the first language. However, cognitive flexibility is an attribute of the proficient bilingual. In other words, the process of a second language acquisition can have varying proficiency levels from social language to academic language.

Bilingual Second Culture Acquisition

Learning a second language, it is not only grammar and vocabulary that one learns but also culture. Language learners are individuals in their own right with a social status and identity, who have been socialized into a given culture.

Second language learning has dealt with cultural subjects in connect with language development. For successful second language acquisition, second language

and second culture inevitably need to be learned at the same time. In other words, bilingual education must bring two cultures and cultural identities into the interaction.

Michael Byram and Karen Risager's (1999), in *Language Teachers, Politics and Cultures*, mentioned:

The foreign language learner must be able to perceive and understand the cultures of the native-speaker, to reflect on his/ her own culture as seen from the foreign perspective, and to relate one to the other, explain each in terms of the other, accepting that conflicting perceptions are not always reconcilable. This is a quite different cultural competence from that of the native-speaker's and needs the new designation of 'intercultural speaker' (1999, p.59).

Second language learners bring their culture to the interaction, but also adjust to the identity bestowed upon them through the second language, and become representatives of their cultures. Thus, second language/culture learners are exposed to both enculturation and acculturation.

Success in learning a language is partially related to the acquisition of the cultural learning that is going along with any linguistic system. Both first culture and second culture learning are processes which reflect the nature of stages of enculturation and acculturation in the first and second language acquisition. They need a specialized context in which the environment should be made as open as possible for intercultural communication.

A child in bilingual program uses his/her own culture to increase awareness of other cultures. Moreover, Hoopes (1979) describes the intercultural learning process as a continuum from assimilation, adaption, biculturalism, or multiculturalism. As the child grows up in bilingual and bi-culture contexts, he/she is aware of making the decision to adjust to her/his understanding and attitude necessitated by encounters with the other

culture. A learner sees his/her own culture as a center of the universe in respect to many other views of the universe.

Damen (1987) elaborates that the acquisition of a first culture (enculturation) and that of a second or additional culture (acculturation) exhibit unique variations. He said: "Although language learning and culture learning are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, the processes of differ from each other in first as well as in subsequent acquisitions (p.6)." Thus, "inhabitants" (Damen, 1987, p7) of first language and second language learning are engaged in culture learning and attempting intercultural communication. Culture acquisition need to be provided a specialized environment for intercultural communication and learning. It is believed that this is the only way in which cultural contact and language acquisition can be made (Damen, 1987) in light of the development of cultural identity.

Theories of Cultural Identity

What is "cultural identity"? Hall (1996) argues cultural identity is a process of identification which is in ongoing construction. In the process, the individual becomes aware of common characteristics shared with other individuals and groups at various levels. Moreover, Sumaryono and Wilma (2004) point out that when most people describe "cultural identity," they generally think that the most important components are the language and ethnicity of the social and cultural group to which they feel connected and belong to. In other words, cultural identity can be defined that one's common characteristics shared among group member who feel connected based on shared the language and ethnicity. For example, individual shares or feels the common characteristics with the groups such as ancestry, territoriality, institution, values, norms, and language. West (1992) asserts that people understand the distribution of material

resources in their society and they know how to gain access to power and privilege for recognition, affiliation, and security and safety. West emphasizes that they understand their relationship to the world and their possibilities for the future.

Working on feminist poststructuralist tradition, Weedon (1987) integrates language, individual experience, and social power in a theory of subjectivity. She believes that subjectivity and language are conceived as reciprocally constitutive (Weedon, 1987). Language is important in constructing the relationship between the individuality and a social and cultural context. In other words, cultural identity is something that lies between identity and relations of power and symbolic power, because subjectivity is produced and structured in a variety of social sites by relations of power.

From a social and psychological perspective (Landry & Allard, 1992; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), cultural identity is that individual behavior which can be guided by the value system of the culture, and that which can hold positive attitudes towards the culture, and can feel a sense of belonging to the culture. Psychological researchers highlight the mutual influences between the value system of the culture and individual emotion. Singer (1982, p.54) explains that an individual perceives the process of his/her own cultural identity:

Man behaves as he does because of the ways in which he perceives the external world. . . . While individuals and the groups which they constitute can only act or react on the basis of their perceptions, the important point is that at the "same" stimuli are often perceived differently by different individuals and groups.

Not only the language he speaks and the way in which he thinks, but even what he sees, hears, tastes, touches, and smells are conditioned by the culture in which he has been raised (Singer, 1982, p.54).

Singer describes an identity group as an aggregation of individuals which exists within a society. Identity groups are formed by collection of persons sharing similar ideas and emotions of the external world.

In addition, from a post-structural perspective, Norton (1997) concludes that cultural identity refers to the relationship between individuals and members of a group who share a common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world. Summarizing the relationship of language and identity, she says that, "it is complex, contradictory, co-constructed, and multifaceted" (p.79). In other words, cultural identity is the kind of contextualization that individuals in social process construct. As outlined above, an understanding of cultural identity from different perspectives will guide this study.

Overall, to a bilingual learner, cultural identity is not only a relationship between the individual and society, but it is the process of enculturation which takes place during childhood and is largely formed by the individual's family, native institutions, and experiences. However, even in the same environment, individuals do not have the similar personal experiences. Thus, culture identity has two parts, partly private part and partly public part (Doman, 1987). Partly public part of cultural identity is similar to that of others (Norton, 1997; Hall, 1996; Sumaryono and Wilma, 2004). The partly private part of cultural identity is "idiosyncratic" (Damen, 1987, p.140), which is revealed by (Landry & Allard, 1992; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Weedon (1987).

Conclusion

Chinese educators and scholars in Taiwan still seek what is most important from Chinese philosophy of education to encourage real dialogue between traditional

Chinese philosophy and western educational philosophy (Shenghon, J. & Dan, J., 2011) In this chapter, I reviewed important issues in traditional study of early childhood bilingual education in where two important elements, language and culture, had been discussed from perspectives of early childhood bilingual education. A brief of Chinese education and Chinese educational philosophy were positioned to support an awareness of background knowledge of current Chinese education. An understanding of theories and practices of bilingual education in the world provide a lens to investigate a bilingual preschool in Taiwan related to language and culture acquisition at bilingual contexts. Moreover, theories of language and culture were extended to include the investigation of bilingual first language and culture acquisition as well as bilingual second language and culture acquisition, as the relation between the two have become a concern of bilingual educators in Taiwan where there are concerns about whether bilingualism would negatively or positively affect in early childhood education. Theories of cultural identity were addressed to examine a process of cultural identity from various perspectives. Overall, the literature reviewed in this study developed a formwork to study an early childhood bilingual program of a school in Taiwan where issues of language and cultural identity are of primary concern.

From a Colonized to a Multilingual and Multicultural Society

Taiwan is composed of diverse races which are constituted by 91 percent Han and 9 percent Austronesians. The indigenous population is divided into two subgroups, the Plain tribe and the Mountain tribes who are Amis, Paiwan, Puyuma, Saisiyat, Yami, Atayal, Bunun, Rukai, and Tsou (Tsao, F., 1997). By 1895, 98 percent of Taiwan's immigrants were Han who were pioneers in the late Ming and Qing dynasties and

consisted of Hakka, from the mainland's Guangdong Province, and Minnan, from the mainland's southern Fujian Province.

Like many Asian countries, Taiwan also had a colonial experience that influenced its ethnolinguistic composition and political development (Copper, 2003). Taiwan's colonial experiences were complex. As the immigrants interacted with the Austronesian aborigines, frequently these tribes' cultures and languages disappeared and they assimilated into the Chinese culture and language. Although for business trade, Taiwan was occupied by the Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish for short periods, there was not much effort on changing the language and culture of Taiwan (Copper, 2003). However, in 1894, Taiwan was ceded to Japan by the Qing dynasty regime because Qi dynasty regime lost the Sino-Japanese war. Taiwan remained a Japanese colony until 1945, the end of World War II, when it returned to China. The period of Japanese colonization (1895-1945) was characterized by a rigid but successful effort to educate all Taiwanese elites in the Japanese language and culture which had particularly profound effects on cultural identity (Tsao, Feng-fu, 1999). Later, in 1949, the Nationalist-government lost the mainland of China to the Communists and withdrew to Taiwan. Taiwan, under the administration of the Nationalist government, launched a very successful land-reform and developed into a prosperous industrialized society. With rapid economic growth, education was no longer a luxury to the people of Taiwan. In 1982, 98.6% of the elementary students continued their studies into middle school (Tsao, F., 1999) and Mandarin became the dominant office language. People had opportunities to receive higher education, which increased their ability to get better jobs, receive higher incomes, and raise their social status. Indeed, this rapid economic development of

Taiwan is known today as the “Taiwan miracle.” Today, Taiwan has a fully developed economy and a wealthy society, even with the economic downturns in 2011.

Language Sensitivity in Taiwan

Taiwan’s historical and social development allowed the country to develop a diverse ethno-linguistic heritage (Tsao, F. F., 1999). However, when the 1949 government of Chiang Kai-shek was defeated by the Communists and feared an imminent invasion (Tsao, F. F., 1999) from the Communist mainland, Nationalists (KMT) adopted a new language policy which forced every resident of Taiwan to speak and write in standard Mandarin because the Nationalist government believed that great diversity causes a great hindrance to national unification and integration (Tsao, 1996). In Taiwan, there is “unidirectional bilingualism” (Tsao, F. F., 1999) which is a one-way affair, with the lesser population of the aboriginal people, Hakka and Minnan, needing to learn Mandarin rather than the Mainlanders (around two million people after 1949 when Chiang Kai-shek’s military arrived in Taiwan) needing to learn the dialects of the ‘native groups’ (namely Minnanyu, Hakka, and the aboriginal languages). As national integration was the top national priority (Tsao, 1999), this one-way bilingualism became the first choice. The KMT government made an effort to promote Mandarin and Chinese cultural heritage by making Taiwan a sort of cultural repository. Mandarin, the national language, became the only language for official communication, and the language of literacy in Taiwan.

After fifty years of very successful promotion, an estimated 90 percent of the population is able to communicate in Mandarin (Tsao, 1996). All minority languages --- Minnan, Hakka, and aboriginal languages---have become weak and even extinct. Nevertheless, with rapid economic growth, Taiwan’s society grew to be more

democratized, and more and more elites' ethno-consciousness was awakened. The Nationalist government's one-way bilingualism language policy was attacked and oppugned in the 1980s and 1990s (Tsao, 1996). As Taiwan has moved toward democracy, modernization, and economic growth, public opinion and experts' advice have been playing an increasingly important role in the process of language policy making. For ethno-consciousness and the international business trades, the Taiwanese are no longer satisfied with their one-way bilingual policy. Taiwan's newest language-in-education policy (Tsao, 1999) has been largely conducted to include three language education parts: (1) the local island dialects: Hakka, Minnanyu, and aboriginal languages, (2) Mandarin, the national language, and (3) English.

Mandarin, the national language, still has a powerful position in the language-in-education system. It is used in teaching and communication in school and daily life regardless of peoples' home languages or mother tongues. Mandarin is an important subject in the school's curriculum, taking up at least five hours of instruction a week from grade 1 to the college level (Tsao, 1999); in addition, Mandarin is also as a tool and a medium of instruction for acquiring other knowledge. Therefore, competence in Mandarin is deemed representative of students' scholastic achievement.

In spite of the important role of Mandarin, mother tongue education in indigenous languages has turned into a considerable issue for students' understanding of their heritage, culture and language, and can help students to develop concepts about preserving, transmitting, and creating heritage, language and culture. Further, mother tongue education can foster respect for multilingualism. In 2002, indigenous languages were made compulsory by the MOE (Ministry of Education) and most schools allotted

one or two hours per week for the study of one of the indigenous languages. Some counties have even started remedial language courses for various indigenous languages up to the years of the middle school curriculum. Nonetheless, many studies (Huang 1993; Chan 1994; Lin 1994; Tsao 1999) have found that “while proficiency in the mother tongue, Minnanyu, Hakka, or Austronesian language, has deteriorated, proficiency in Mandarin has improved considerably over the generations (Tsao, 1999).” However, indigenous languages are voiced in the diverse ethno-linguistic heritage society.

A Modern Taiwan Where the East Meets the West

Another significant language policy change that has been emerging due to the needs of modern society is English education. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, English, an international language, is very important in Taiwan’s current society. Taiwan’s economic development depends more than in the past on high-tech and highly-literate industries that essentially need various technical knowledge and skilled manpower. Tsao (1996) provided a concrete example: if Taiwan becomes an Asian-Pacific Regional Operational Center, it is estimated that Taiwan needs at least half a million people who not only have specialized knowledge, but also are truly bilingual in English and Chinese. With the ambition to become the international trade center of Asia, Taiwan needs to raise the English proficiency of its people.

Since English is the key to modernization and political and economic power, the Taiwanese felt impelled to have their government adopt English as their second dominant language. Beginning in 2005, the MOE (Ministry of Education) decided that English should be taught in the third grade curriculum of elementary schools nationwide, and in Taipei, the capital, English education would start in the first grade. English

learning has become a 'movement' of all Taiwanese. From pre-schoolers to elderly people, whether male or female, everyone shows great interest in learning English and tries hard to improve their English proficiency. From school academic learning to commercial business, from TV programs to advertisements, everywhere one can read/see English words and hear English in Taiwan.

Despite the fact that English is not the official second language in Taiwan, its importance and influence worry some scholars and educators. They are concerned that Taiwan is gradually becoming an English colony. They agonize that the hegemony of English will diminish the respect, use, and value of Chinese languages or even make Chinese languages and culture inferior to English and the Western culture. Since MOE inevitably extended English education from the elementary to the middle school level, more and more Taiwanese parents believe that if they do not provide an early English learning environment, their children will not be as competitive in the future. Thus, numerous private institutes and organizations provide English instruction from preschool to graduate levels, even as early as nursery school (one-two years old). English has come to be the dominant language and is overpowering the Chinese language to a certain extent. Moreover, some private schools allow their English teachers to punish children for speaking Chinese (Mandarin) in classrooms. Shannon (1995) developed a working definition of linguistic hegemony:

Wherever more than one language or language variety exists together, their status in relation to one another is often asymmetric. In those cases, one will be perceived as superior, desirable, and necessary, where the other will be seen as inferior, undesirable, and extraneous (p.8).

Educators and scholars are concerned that the Chinese language and culture will become inferior, undesirable, and extraneous with the rise of this English hegemony in

Taiwan. They strongly oppose English learning from pre-school or kindergarten. They believe that if the Taiwanese do not resist the hegemony of English, the Taiwanese will lose their cultural identity and their languages.

Conclusion

From the colonized to a multilingual and multicultural society, Taiwan has developed a diverse ethno-linguistic culture consisting of Minnanyu, aboriginal languages, Hakka, Japanese, Mandarin, and even English. However, for over 100 years Taiwan has feared losing its cultural identity and languages, especially since the Japanese invasion and the later take-over by the Nationalist government. They have worried about losing the Chinese languages, Minnanyu and Hakka, when the Japanese occupied Taiwan, and losing the aboriginal languages, Hakka, and Minnany, since the Nationalist Government began ruling Taiwan. They have been concerned about losing the local languages and their cultural identity twice in the last 100 years of history. Currently, they are terrified of losing Chinese (Mandarin) and cultural identity since many Taiwanese have become desperate to learn English in order to become a modern country and the international trade center of Asia. In reality, although the Taiwanese have an historical fear of losing their cultural heritage and languages, they are eager to develop into a modern high-tech industrialized society.

Therefore, the fear of the loss of languages and cultural identity in Taiwan because of outside interference (first to the Japan invaders, later to the Mainland force, and currently to the Western world influence) makes Taiwan not only sensitive to language and cultural issues, but also more aware of the necessity to fight, protect, and maintain its language and cultural identity. Currently, Taiwan, a small island, has a common consensus that the international language, English, is an inevitable language

for the needs of modern society; however, Taiwanese also fight against the hegemony of English in order to maintain their language and cultural identity. My research school faced the dilemma of either developing an English program or maintaining the heritage culture and languages for young children. The school did not take either position; moreover, the school makes efforts to fight against hegemony and educate children to become bilingual and bi-literate modern citizens with English competence and knowledge of Chinese literary tradition.

Early Childhood Bilingual Education in Taiwan

Although early childhood education is deemed as informal education, not compulsory education in Taiwan, it has developed in Taiwan over the past 100 years (Lin, 2007). Traditional early childhood education in Taiwan was heavily influenced by Chinese values which emphasized academic achievement; therefore, teaching practices in early childhood education in Taiwan focused on didactic methods such as: memory and recitation, formal-school skills such as counting and Mandarin phonetic symbols, and pencil-paper activities such as practicing quizzes. However, in the past 20 years, many scholars and educators have studied in Western countries, such as the USA, England, and Germany, and they have brought back the ideas and philosophy of Western education such as the theories of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Erikson, and Rudolf Steiner; consequently, these have deeply impacted Taiwanese early childhood education. Many early childhood schools have adopted Western educational concepts such as attending to children's needs, democracy in the classroom, hands-on activities, and the importance of free-play (Lin and Tsai, 1996).

However, because early childhood education is not an indispensable responsibility of the government in Taiwan, parents have to pay the tuition by themselves; therefore,

they also bring a lot of ideas and expectations to early childhood education. Many parents enrolling their children in kindergarten expect the school to arouse their children's growth in intelligence in early stages (Lin, 2007). Moreover, many middle-class parents think that sending their children to a preschool/kindergarten that not only has a high emphasis on individual creativity, autonomy, and critical thinking but also on academic learning will add up to an emphasis on English education. They think literacy in English is necessary and represents their child's future financial and career success. This is the reason why early childhood bilingual education receives widespread support from parents.

While early childhood bilingual education is very popular and profitable in Taiwan, it encounters the following obstacles and problems:

- Most of the early childhood bilingual schools follow Western educational philosophy and ideas which are not relevant for children's Taiwanese/Chinese cultural beliefs and educational philosophy. Early childhood bilingual education is too westernized for Taiwanese children because of the influences both from Western educational philosophy and English language usage.
- Most of the early childhood bilingual schools emphasize English language learning and ignore children's Chinese language development.
- Most of the early childhood bilingual schools rely on ready-made English language teaching materials which include Western contents and ideas within a narrow curriculum design. Bilingual curriculum contents are based on English language knowledge and are not related to Taiwanese children's real-life experiences.

Western educational philosophy and theories are introduced in teachers' colleges and conducted by teachers in English in bilingual preschool/kindergarten classrooms. Western cultures and educational philosophy and language have significantly infused Taiwanese early childhood bilingual education. Thus, in order to deal with the serious concerns above, the demands for early childhood bilingual schools are growing.

Scholars and educators are trying very hard to prevent the loss of the Chinese language and cultural identity in current early childhood bilingual education.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The Major Questions Explored in the Study

This study investigated how a Pre-K school balances a Chinese and English bilingual program and how the balanced Pre-K bilingual program impacts the national language and cultural identity. Understanding the contexts of the school was critical to investigate the philosophy/mission and curriculum/teaching practices of the school. Thus, the organizing research questions evolved from a literature review of bilingual education and the synthesis of the relationship of language and culture and curriculum development.

1. What is the educational philosophy of the Pre-K bilingual program of the Natural Way School in Taiwan?
2. How do the curriculum and instructional planning of the school demonstrate its balance in the Pre-K bilingual program?
3. What are the perceptions about the program by students who have graduated and their parents?

Perspective Research Methodology

Qualitative research is a field of inquiry which can facilitate researchers' understanding of the complexity of social and cultural contexts including people's beliefs, values, identities, and attitudes. Moreover, a qualitative case study is appropriate for exploring a bounded system in depth, and the bounded system of interest represented in the case being studied (Stake 1995), which has three features, "particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic". In other words, a case study can demonstrate a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon (Merriam, 1998) in a rich and

thick description, which can “illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1998, p.30). Since this study was to describe the complexities of language and cultural development in an early childhood bilingual education school, it needs “a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries” (Merriam, 1998, p.25). Moreover, a case study could present a “holistic” and “lifelike” (Merriam, 1998, p.30) description of how the School conducts bilingual education. Thus, I utilized case studies as my research design to seek an in-depth understanding. Many scholars (Robeter Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998, and Robert Yin, 2003) wrote about designs of case studies that are very common in educational research such as describing educational systems of a classroom, a program, a school, or a college campus. In a similar vein, research techniques of case studies were studied and applied in this study to triangulate multiple data sources, including interviews, observations, and artifacts, to develop an in-depth exploration to better understand my case study.

An epistemology is a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know (Crotty, 1998, Hatch, 2002). From a constructivism perspective, “meaning in context” (Merriam, 1998, p. 1), all knowledge is socially constructed (Gergen, 1985), and all meaning is constructed by human beings as they engage with the world. “What we have to work with is the world and objects in the world” (Crotty, 1998, p.44). In other words, knowledge is formed between the objective world and the subjective mind through human beings’ engagement and interpretation. My research was grounded with constructivism as an epistemology, and therefore, the belief that theories are dependent upon the construction of knowledge. I believe all theories depend on situations in which they are not discovered, but are constructed. Also, I consider that we cannot sufficiently

describe any object in isolation from our conscious experience, nor can any experience be described in isolation from the object of the experience. Experience is directed toward objects and the object is shaped by the experience. Objects and experiences mutually interact as social interpretations are constructed. Moreover, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty (Crotty, 2004, p.44) state that “the world is ‘always already there’. The world and objects in the world may be themselves meaningless; yet they are our partners in the generation of meaning and need to be taken seriously (Crotty, 1998).” My research attempted to construct knowledge within a constructivist paradigm in the form of a case study with a rich and thick (Merriam, 1988) description.

Via the lens of constructivists, the focus of this study is on the object, the school, in which knowledge has been constructed by the school and the participants’ perception. With this intention, qualitative research is capable of providing in-depth information because quantitative research usually seeks for general patterns with a large scale of samples. Thus, it does not allow me to see current phenomenon within its real-life context. More importantly, quantitative research tends to use the final product to explain the result, in which there is no rich narrative and description to reveal some important ignored variables, particularly an individual’s prior knowledge, cultural background, language policy, and social contexts.

Pilot Study

With the IRB approval, I conducted a pilot study in Taiwan from June 1st to August 25th, 2009. The purposes of the pilot study were: 1) to test my research methods which included research questions, interview questions, data collection methods, and data analysis methods (Glesne, 1999; Sampson, 2004), 2) to familiarize myself with the research setting, and 3) to narrow the research focus. The pilot study was very helpful

in changing my position from an insider to an outsider with a researcher's lens doing observation and interviews. I refined semi-structured interview questions about cultural identity issues; meanwhile, I changed my interviewees from kindergarteners to former students who were old enough to understand cultural identity questions because kindergarten children were too young to answer the questions. I interviewed students and teachers who entered a summer English program. The majority of the information was gathered from observations, informal interviews, semi-structured interviews, and artifacts. The findings from the pilot study were later used as background knowledge for this study.

Setting of the Study

This research was an investigation of cultural identity and English education in a Pre-K bilingual program of a private school, a bilingual educational context. The setting for this study was a school with grades from preschool to high school located in the middle of Taiwan. The range of ages of school students was from 3-15 years old. There are 4 divisions of the school: preschool, kindergarten, elementary school and middle school. Most children in the school were from middle-class families whose parents were enthusiastic and involved in their children's education. My focus was on the Pre-K bilingual program. There were three groups of students in Pre-K bilingual program: 3-4 year olds, 4-5 year olds, and 5-6 year olds, totally around 120 students. The school was chosen because the bilingual program has existed since 1997 and the English teaching has a good reputation in the region. Another reason was that I had worked for this school for 9 years beginning in October of 1997. As a former employee of the school, I had easy access to approach the school's administrators, students, teachers, parents,

and documents, and I was very familiar with programs and environment, which would be a big help for me in carrying out the research and collecting data.

Participants in the Study

Research participants were students, teachers, the founder, and administrators of the school. I conducted my pilot study in summer. As I interviewed some participants, I found that when I asked some questions about cultural issues, former older students displayed more confidence and understanding in their response, but when I asked questions about the purposes of the schools' activities, I found that only students who studied at the school for more than 2-3 years had some ideas and opinions. Thus, I used criteria sampling to select and recruit my participants. The following selection criteria were used: (1) administrators who were in early childhood bilingual program; (2) teacher participants who taught early bilingual programs for at least for one year; (3) student participants who were former students and over 15 years old; (4) parent participants whose children had been in Pre-K bilingual programs for 2-3 years.

I recruited 24 participants: 10 students, 8 teachers, 3 parents, 2 administrators, and 1 founder. The purpose of these interviews was to collect information to answer my research questions (Kuzel, 1999; Patton, 1990). Ten former students were over 15 years old and they were in the bilingual program of the School for 2-3 years when they were preschoolers. Three homeroom Chinese teachers, two English speaking instructors, and three subject-teachers were interviewed. In addition, 3 parents and 2 additional administrators were included to provide other perspectives on the bilingual program. Additionally, I interviewed the school's founder.

Data Collection

A variety of qualitative data were collected. Multiple data sources included interviews, archival data, and observations. The methodology of the study was based on a constructionist theoretical framework. Data was gathered from three main sources: 1) interviews: semi-structured interviews, informal interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to learn about the school's philosophy and the results of the educational practices of its Pre-K bilingual program. 2) Archival data that included the school's curriculum, course syllabi, teachers' lesson plans, supplementary exercises, textbooks, and students work. The purpose of collecting artifacts was to supplement my understanding the curriculum of the Pre-K bilingual program. 3) Observations that included: classroom activities and school events. Field notes and reflections were recorded. Observations I conducted for the pilot study in the summer of 2009 were included. As an insider who became an outside observer, I became a passive observer, which allowed me to physically be in the school, but not take part in the classroom activities. The purpose of the observations was to understand the interaction between teachers and students in the school and the classroom activities. Surveys also were used to find out the students' ages and years in the school.

Procedures of Data Collection

Interviews

There were two kinds of interviews: Semi-structured interviews and informal interviews. There were four protocols (Appendix A, B, C, D) for semi-structured interviews (Table 1). The first protocol was for students, the second protocol was for teachers, the third was for parents, and the fourth was for the founder part. The 40-50 minute-semi-structured interviews focused on participants' past experiences and were

held with former student participants. Each participant was asked to recall his/her previous experience of learning English in the bilingual program and to describe his/her cultural identity. The one hour, semi-structured interviews with teachers were focused on how they conducted their teaching and designed lesson plans under the School's philosophy and mission. Interviews with parents emphasized how they take part in the school's activities and how they support their children in bilingual education, and what their opinions are of the Pre-K bilingual program at the Natural Way School. The interview with the founder was conducted to clarify the school's philosophy. All participants could use either Chinese or English in the interviews. Interviewees responded freely without any limitations. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed.

The other interviews were informal interviews. These interviews were conducted spontaneously whenever the time and place was appropriate during the pilot study summer. These interviews were conducted purposely with main informants who had insight into the school's issues, such as administrators. Interviews were conducted with a non-fixed set of questions which were open-ended and unstructured. The interviews allowed the interviewees to discuss various features of various school's issues and activities. The purpose of informal interviews was to guide me to understand the related issues by providing general information about the school. The administrators usually became more talkative after the tape-recorder was turned off, speaking freely on many interesting and controversial school policies and events. In all the interviews I followed a 'listen more, talk less' strategy (Seidman 1991). A digital recorder was used to record the interviews. Sometimes, I took short notes to guide me during the interviews.

Table 3-1. Interview

Interviews		Numbers	Times	Time	Total
Participants					
Semi-structured interviews	Students	10	1	40-50 minutes	7 hours
	Parents	2	1	1.5 hour	3 hours
	Teachers	8	1	1 hour	8 hours
	Founder	1	2	2 hours	4 hours
Informal interviews	Students	6	2	No limit	No limit
	Administrators	3	2	No limit	No limit

Observation

My study was “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 25); therefore, observation in real contexts was necessary and important for collecting data. Observation times were scheduled in 2009 and 2010. During those periods, I went to the schools from Mondays through Fridays 9:00-5:00. In 2009, my observation focused on interactions between students and teachers (Table 3-2). In 2010, my observation focused on the School’s events and classroom activities (Table 3-3). It was dense observation and I kept field notes and reflections of observation. In the observation process, I was involved as a non-participation observer even in the classrooms of some teachers I was very familiar with. My field notes recorded what happened in the school and how the students involved themselves in the school’s events and classroom activities.

Survey

A personal background questionnaire (Appendix E) was to survey the students’ personal background, ages, language learning experience during Pre-K bilingual education, and reflection on bilingual education. I conducted it after I interviewed my

former student participants. Its purpose was to increase understanding of the participants' learning background.

Table 3-2. Observations in 2009

Observations: focus on interactions between teachers and students	Total
3-4years old classrooms: 5/28, 5/29, 6/5, 6/8, 6/15, 6/16, 6/23, 6/24, 7/1, 7/2, 7/9, 7/10, days	12
4-5 years old classrooms: 6/1, 6/2, 6/9, 6/10, 6/17, 6/18, 6/25, 6/26, 7/3, 7/6, 7/13, 7/14 days	12
5-6 years old classrooms: 6/3, 6/4, 6/11, 6/12, 6/19, 6/22, 6/29, 6/30, 7/7, 7/8, 7/15, 7/16 days	12

Table 3-3. Observations in 2010

Observations: focus on classroom activities and school's events	Total
3-4years old classrooms: 5/31, 6/1, 6/8, 6/9, 6/16, 6/17, 6/24, 6/25, 7/1, 7/2, 7/9 days	11
4-5 years old classrooms: 6/2, 6/3, 6/10, 6/11, 6/18, 6/21, 6/28, 6/29, 7/5, 7/6, 7/12 days	11
5-6 years old classrooms: 6/4, 6/7, 6/14, 6/15, 6/22, 6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/8, 7/13, 7/14 days	11

Collection of Artifacts

McCulloch (2004) mentions: "Documents represented evidence that researchers did not produce for themselves, but which was already in existence (p.26)." This means that documents were not manipulated by the researcher for conducting their research. Moreover, Denny Taylor & Catherine Dorsey-Gaines use Levine's words that "we cannot afford to ignore the content and functions of written materials" and "the

information that they contain is a strategic social resource” (p. 263). Thus, commercial prints (advertisements) of the school yielded information about the contents and purposes of the school, and the school’s document records were used to gain an in-depth understanding of the school’s daily activities. I paid attention to my needs and goals of study to determine the selection and collection.

My document collection could be divided into two parts which were ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ sources. Primary sources “constitute ‘the basic, raw, imperfect evidence’, which were often fragmentary, scattered and difficult to use” (Marwick, 1970, p. 131), such as: lesson plans, teachers’ diaries, course syllabi, supplementary exercise records, and students’ written work... Secondary sources included the text-books, an advertising brochure, teaching video-tapes, and audio tapes of the founder’s speech; these provided coherent look at the school’s history, promotion and an introduction to the school’s mission. They provided a rich source of data for understanding the school’s teaching and learning because ‘they are not discovered’ on purpose (Merriam, 1991, p.44) and they are deemed as a holistic record of teaching and learning. The tapes were analyzed to furnish cultural information for understanding the school’s mission and philosophy. Collecting these artifacts really helped me answer my research questions.

While collecting data, I worked on the analysis process and used the data to generate information for interviews and to discover more information for analysis. In addition, my field notes were an important resource when I analyzed my observations, artifacts, and interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a consistent and systematic method to analyze the data for presenting the findings of the study, which align with the theoretical perspective for the

study. Numerous data was produced during process of collection. I divided data into two parts: (1) documents and (2) transcriptions, in which I used separate methods of analysis: description-analysis-interpretation and domain analysis.

In my study, I knew that document analysis in documentary-based educational and social research is an important practice. Thus, whether primary or secondary documents, all needed to be read critically and analyzed rather than being taken at surface value. I applied McCulloch's rules (2004) in appraising and analyzing my study documents, which are authenticity, reliability, meaning and theorization. Since authenticity is a fundamental criterion (Scott, 1990), the first step for analyzing was to establish the authenticity of the document to determine whether the evidence was 'genuine and of unquestionable origin' (Scott 1990, p.6). McCulloch (2004) suggests that in the case of documents, the author, the place, and the date of writing all need to be established and verified. I concluded the authenticity of evidence for the research. The second step was to appraise reliability or the truth and bias of the documents. I checked how readily the documents could be relied on, and whether they might give a false outline of events or omit important points to avoid incurring the displeasure of the readers for whom it was intended. Tosh (2002) points out that "each type of source possesses certain strengths and weakness; considered together, and compared one against the other, there is a chance that they will reveal the true facts or something very close to them" (2002, p.98) . I took this concern into account in my study. Meanwhile, I knew that bias is also produced by a wide range of possible intentions, such as to rationalize one's own actions, to discredit those of others, to support a case or to undermine it, and to understate a problem or to exaggerate it. As McCulloch says:

Several writers have suggested that, in order to overcome these potential problems of reliability and bias, it is necessary to make use of a wide range of different kinds of documents which will represent alternative viewpoints and interests. At times this process appears to be conceived as a form of triangulation, through which the truth will emerge from testing different kinds of documents against each other. According to Tosh, for instance, historical research should not be dependent on a single source, for it is likely to be in some way inaccurate, incomplete or otherwise tainted. (McCulloch, 2004, p.44)

Therefore, I understood that biases involved in document selection were a significant clue for me to the issues being analyzed and I asked second opinions from former colleagues to overcome the potential problems of reliability and bias. Another important issue of document analysis was the meaning of the document. In other words, I had to pay attention to the context in which the document was produced (McCulloch, 2004), and the meaning of document helped me to ensure that the evidence was clear and comprehensible. The last step was developing a theoretical framework through which to interpret the document. Jupp and Norris (1993) stressed that the interpretive approach emphasizes the nature of social phenomena such as documents that are socially constructed. The analysis of the documents based on this perspective set out to establish the socially constructed interpretation of the text. This approach aimed at providing an accurate practice to show how the school finds the balance in two languages and two cultures, what students do learn, what the school does look like, at critical moments in a particular place (p.149). I described everything conceivable such as all the information from the school's documents, which might unwieldy and incomprehensible. However, I determined what was and was not relevant data. As Wolcott (1994) quotes his favorite ethnographer, Michael Agar:

In ethnography . . . you learn something ("collect data"), then you try to make sense out of it ("analysis"), then you go back and see if the

interpretation makes sense in light of new experience (“collect more data”), then you refine your interpretation (“more analysis “), and so on. The process is dialectic, not linear. (Agar, 1980, p. 9)

I used Wolcott’s (1994) description-analysis-interpretation to transform the data.

Description addresses the question, “What is going on here?” I tried to interpret and mark it in phrases like ‘cultural purpose’, ‘language development’, 24 solar terms, or ‘cultural orientation’. Then, I went back to my description to see if it made sense or not with the new information or data I collected, and I refined my interpretation. Data consisted of observations written by me and documents from the School.

Analysis addresses the identification of essential features and the systematic description of interrelationships among them—in short, how things work. In terms of stated objectives, analysis also may be employed evaluatively to address questions of why the school is now working or how it might be made to work “better”. When I went through the documents, I interpreted processes, questions of meanings and contexts: “What does it all mean?” “What is to be made of it all?” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 12) I applied Wolcott’s questions throughout the process. As I carefully read each document, “what” was in my mind to help me to understand the document. Then, I categorized, organized, and synthesized. This analysis started from descriptions of the practices of the school according to school’s documents and field notes in order to gain the general information for research questions.

The other type of data consisted of the transcripts of interviews. I analyzed the transcripts of interviews in using Glaser (1992) and Strauss’ (1987) methods for domain analysis which is the constant comparative method. Merriam (1998) asserted that constant comparative is “the inductive, concept-building orientation of all qualitative research” (p. 159). It was my purpose in the study to provide an in-depth description. I

wrote domain analysis worksheets and open coding. Qualitative coding was used to define what the data are about. I named – segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorized, summarized, and accounted for each piece of data (Charmaz, 2006), and developed the categories in which constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was conducted.

Table 3-4. Coding Example

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEWS	CODE
Interviewer: What reasons? You send your Child to bilingual program of the Natural Way?	Explaining: Trend Explaining: Good English Explaining: Age
Parents A: it is trend. Most of people send Their children to bilingual school. I would like my child to learn English in preschool. I think it is better than learn English when they grow up.	Explaining: Power/competitive Presenting himself: social economic status Inability: cannot communicate
Parents: I thought more English ability more power. She becomes more competitive. Like my social-economic status, I think English is very important. I have good education, but I could not communicate with English speakers in English. I think it is my regret that I cannot speak English. I learned English when I was in middle school. It is too later. Teenagers have strong self-esteem. I am embarrassed to speak English because I feared to make mistakes and lose my face. My child is young. It is good time for her to learn English. She doesn't worry that she makes errors. Nobody teases her.	Explaining: Too late to learn English Explaining: Self-esteem/lose face Suggesting: Young for learning English Accepting: trial and error Explaining: no tease

My codes showed I took segments of data apart, named them in concise terms, and proposed an “analytic handle” (Charmaz, 2006, p.45) to develop abstract ideas for interpreting a segment of data. I attempted to interpret the meaning and gained a sense of the parent’s concerns and expectations.

Table 3-5. Proposed Outlines of Data Sources, Collection, and Analysis

Research Questions	Data Resource	Method of Collection	Method of Data Analysis
What is the Pre-K bilingual program's educational philosophy?	Interviews: Founder, Teachers, Administrators Archival: Curriculum, Lesson plan	Observation, Interviews, Artifacts	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis
How does the curriculum of the Pre-K bilingual program balance Chinese and English learning?	School's events and Activities, Curriculum, Students' work, Textbooks, Lesson plans, Teaching diaries	Observation, Interviews, Artifacts	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis
What are the results of educational practices in a balanced bilingual program upon the young children?	Interviews: Students, Founder, Teachers, Administrators, parents Survey: Students	Interviews Artifacts Observation Survey	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis
What is the Pre-K bilingual program's educational philosophy?	Interviews: Founder, Teachers, Administrators Archival: Curriculum, Lesson plan	Observation, Interviews, Artifacts	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis
How does the curriculum of the Pre-K bilingual program balance Chinese and English learning?	School's events and Activities, Curriculum, Students' work, Textbooks, Lesson plans, Teaching diaries	Observation, Interviews, Artifacts	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis
What are the results of educational practices in a balanced bilingual program upon the young children?	Interviews: Students, Founder, Teachers, Administrators, parents Survey: Students	Interviews Artifacts Observation Survey	1. Description analysis 2. Domain analysis

Of course, constant comparison was applied to analyze documents, observations, and field notes. Different types of data were categorized, organized and synthesized for developing theories. I used cross-data to analyze each type of data; then, constant comparative method assisted me to induct themes and conceptualize theories.

Validity and Reliability

The findings in the study should be considered with the trustworthiness and the degree of rigor. Glesne (1999) cites eight verification procedures outlined by Creswell (1988, p. 201-203). I used them as methods of rigor.

1. Prolonged engagement
2. Triangulation or use of multiple data collection methods
3. Clarification of researchers' bias
4. Member checking
5. Rich, thick description
6. External audit

In order to increase credibility of the study, the different data collection methods, observations, interviews, and artifacts were used to strengthen the study in terms of data triangulation (Denzin, 1978). Gee (2005 #72 p.74) suggested validity should be increased by using different analysis. Therefore, I applied Wolcott's (1994) description analysis and Glaser (1992) and Strauss' (1987) domain analysis. In addition to cross checking the observations to provide insights about the school's contexts, such as the atmosphere, I also observed teaching instruction, and the students' engagement in activities and interactions with peers and with the teacher. For clarification of researcher's bias, I did a double check with the participants about their responses when I had done my interviewing. Artifacts such as curriculum, lesson plans, and students' writings, and curricula all supplement the textbooks, work books, lesson plans, and exercises and serve as evidence that can illustrate a part of the whole picture of the school for rich and thick description of the study. Finally, my external audit was my colleagues who are doctoral students majoring in ESL, math education, reading, literacy, and educational technology in my study group. During the data analysis stage, they audited my transcript and helped me reexamine my research process.

Subjectivity Statement

In a qualitative research, the researching of the selected topic and the way of interpreting research findings are shaped by researcher's perspectives (Glesne, 1998). Indeed, as a former assistant principal who worked for the school for 9 years, my position might be considered an inside researcher. Merton (1972) noted that inside researchers looking into their own work organization appears far too narrow on a number of counts and is usually taken for granted by insiders as to be practically invisible (Garfinkel, 1967). As Merton mentioned, insiders have close and intimate relationships with the organization, which may pollute the objectivity of their research. However, Hockey (1993) points out the strengths of the insider viewpoint. He says:

The advantages of researching in familiar settings, for example, the relative lack of culture shock or disorientation, the possibility of enhanced rapport and communication, the ability to gauge the honesty and accuracy of responses, and the likelihood that respondents will reveal more intimate details of their lives to someone considered empathetic are juxtaposed with the problems that proponents of insider research nevertheless acknowledge. (Hockey, 1993, p.199)

His viewpoint strengthens the position of insider research. He appreciates the "insider as an individual who possesses a priori intimate knowledge of the community and its members" (Hellawell, 2006, p.484). The retrospective analysis shows a very sensitive awareness of the varying 'research distances' (Hellawell, 2006, p.484) "involved as her own employment position changed and her understanding of and empathy with her interviewees and their situation deepened" (Le Gallais, 2003, p.45). It is a strong support to insider research. However, although I was an insider for 9 years at this school, I am an outsider currently. I left the school in 2006 for five years for advanced study in the USA, which has reinforced my theoretical knowledge of

techniques to review the Pre-K bilingual program at the Natural Way School. I became a more sophisticated researcher. As I returned to the school in the summer of 2009, I became a kind of 'stranger', an outsider, in this social setting. Hence, I can objectively stand back and collect information from the perspective of a researcher. Hellowell, (2006) argues that "ideally the researcher should be both inside and outside the perceptions of the 'researched'". In other words, Hammersley (1993) implies that "both empathy and alienation are useful qualities for a researcher" (p. 34). Thus, my position and learning experience allowed me to be a qualified researcher in this study. My interpretation provided an insider-outsider lens to see the process of bilingual learning in the Pre-K bilingual program.

Summary

The goal of this study was to provide a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of what the bilingual school is, what the school's educational philosophy and balanced curriculum are, and what the perception of the bilingual school from former students and parents is. In other words, the study was to describe how the school balances two languages and two cultures; specifically, what elements of tasks were required and performed by the School in the early childhood bilingual program and how these tasks and ideas seem to enhance opportunities for language and culture development. To fulfill the goal of the study, I used multiple data collection strategies in order to ensure that a variety of data sources were available for description and analysis. The data were collected by observations, survey, formal and informal interviews of students, parents and administrators, and school documents. Because of the nature of the research questions which focus on the "What" and "How" of the school student-school-task interactions, audio-taping of the introduction of the school, on-going

interviews with students and parents, and collection of the school's documents were used as a means to accomplish this goal.

I am aware of some factors affecting the credibility and reliability of this case study as a researcher collecting the data. To produce strong qualitative research, I established trustworthiness and credibility by using various strategies such as triangulation, prolonged engagement, and rich, detailed description. Moreover, data analysis was recursive in nature and took place during the data collection process such as coding, classifying, and describing. I employed Wolcott's (1994) description methods and Strauss's domain analysis methods for analyzing and presenting data. I understand that "authentic" description, new discovery and verification would be taken as a constant movement during data collection and data analysis. My purpose is to present the end result as a thoughtful description.

CHAPTER 4 PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL

The Pre-K Bilingual Program

The Natural Way School has an open-minded atmosphere. Diverse teachers from America, Canada, England, South Africa, and Australia etc speak English with different accents and also speak a little Chinese. Even though the general staff speaks Chinese in the School, they are willing to learn English and try very hard to communicate in English with English speaking instructors. Moreover, the School includes an English department that is in charge foreign affairs. The staff in the English department provides direct information to English instructors in fluent English. For example, people in that department convey the School's educational philosophy and the learning/teaching objectivities, conduct curriculum meetings, and provide teacher training in English. Also, the library supplies more than 2000 English children's books and around 2500 Chinese children's books. Both the Chinese and the English teachers can check out English teaching aids and materials and use them in their classroom. In both English and Chinese, the School helps the teachers develop and strengthen attitudes, attributes, and abilities that characterize effective teaching and help them learn to balance the variety of roles they need to assume.

In the bilingual program, generally there are three levels of classes, the class for 3-4 year olds, two classes for 4-5 year olds, and two to three classes for 5-6 year olds. Each class size is around 20-22 students. Two Chinese teachers and one English instructor work with 20-25 children in each of the 3-5 year old classes, and one Chinese and one English speaking instructor work with the 5-6 years old students. Children may speak both Chinese and English in the classroom. Although the Chinese teachers are

certified in early childhood education and they put forth more effort on children's daily care, all activities are conducted by both the Chinese and English teachers. If the English speaking instructor takes charge of the lessons or activities, all the instruction and procedures are delivered in English. Chinese teachers play the role of an assistant and translator during instruction.

Revisiting the School with a Bilingual and Bicultural Perspective

In 2009 when I stepped into the Natural Way School where I had worked for nine years after being gone for three years, it was the first time I felt the School was distinctive. The portraits of Confucius, Lao-zi, Wang, Shou-rin, Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, and John Dewey came into my view. The tablet of 'The Path of Nature' written in Chinese calligraphy hung at the center of the hall wall with two lines of Chinese characters. The first line: "Knowledge is action. Action is knowledge. When you know then you can act. Knowledge and action should be in unity" by Shou-rin Wang. From the second line: "Living and working are education. Within work, there is learning, and one learns by doing; what one does has useful application" by John Dewey. This belief of the School, I had taken for granted for many years. I had never thought about how and why the words of two philosophers, one an American and the other Chinese, could be put together and become a school's philosophy. Walking through the hallway also was familiar but I was thinking about what the School was; what its philosophy had become; and why teachers remained teaching there. Does the School provide an eminent method to educate children, and what will their students become in the future?

The Educational Philosophy of the Natural Way School

Based on the social-historical context of Taiwan, the use of English as a world language has increased, and English is taught in many schools from kindergarten

through high school and even at universities, especially in the big cities of Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, and Gao-Xiong. Private bilingual schools have been set up to allow students to learn Chinese and English, and these schools had their goals which can meet the needs of students' academic, social, and physical development. The Natural Way Children's School was the school founded in 1997 by Mr. Zeng. The School provides the opportunity for learning English and Chinese and strives to balance bilingual learning.

The Natural Way School has a thirteen year history. The founder, Mr. Zeng, said:

I studied educational philosophy and involved myself in educational projects. It simulated me to rethink what education is good for our children. What curriculum belongs to the Chinese and the culture of our children in our land? In 1997, I visited some outstanding scholars in different fields, and interviewed and invited them to join the School's establishment. Also, I visited some prestigious schools in Taiwan, and even in Japan, France, and Germany. In this period, my ideas were expressed in 16 Chinese characters: Humanistic Concern for the World, Natural Environment, Discovery and Creativity, and Mutual Participation... However, when the first class of kindergarten graduated and moved to elementary school, I started to organize an elementary program for my school. In the process of its establishment, I deeply thought about our own cultural independence and essential education. I tried to seek ONE UNIQUE education which pertains to our people, land, and our life experience and wisdom... In the second period, the ideas of the School could be described by these 12 Chinese characters: Eastern Philosophy, Aesthetic Education, and Innovative Education (06.15.10).

Throughout Mr. Zeng's talk, culture element was mentioned. The curriculum of his school reform was expected to emphasize the importance of Eastern culture which included people, land, and people's life experience and wisdom. Cultural learning was strongly emphasized in his ideal school in which the School weaves and embeds ideas from the West and the East.

According to the interviews and documents I analyzed, I found that even though this bilingual program was set in the School, Chinese culture was not ignored in English

education. The two features of bilingual curriculum are language and culture. In language learning, Chinese and English are required to learn and communicate in a knowledge learning process. In cultural learning, the School's curriculum combines Western education ideas, Chinese culture, and Chinese educational philosophy. In other words, the educational philosophy of the Natural Way School is the combination of Western educational theories, Chinese culture, and Chinese educational philosophy. Nevertheless, the information I gathered gave a beginning point from which to construct a framework of the School's philosophy. The following philosophy is based on an outline of data analysis from the founder, teachers', and administrators' interviews, as well as the School's edited books.

Western Educational Theories and Philosophy

The Natural Way School is partially grounded with Western educational theories and philosophy. It has been influenced by a number of classic educational models such as Montessori (1879-1952), Froebel (1782-1852), Malaguzzi (1920-1994), and Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) and some of educational philosophers including Dewey (1859-1952), Vygotsky (1896-1934), and Piaget (1896-1980). Mr. Zeng said:

Learning from Western classic educational models and philosophy derived from the scientific approval or experimental approaches may help us to avoid the shortcomings of current Western educational development, and solve some of the educational problems Taiwan confronts; moreover, possibly it can assist us to develop our own feasible pedagogy for the Chinese (08.16.09).

Mr. Zeng is inclined to include some important concepts of human development and theories of psychological education from Western educational philosophy which are missing in Eastern education. Such as: (1) psychodynamic theory; (2) maturational theory, espoused by G. Stanley Hall and Robert Havighurst (1844-1924); (3) behavioral

theory, influenced by John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner (1878-1959); (4) sociocultural theory, discussed by Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) who emphasized the influence of society and culture on children's development; and cognitive developmental theory, with contributions from Jean Piaget (1896-1980); and (5) philosophy guided by John Dewey, Rudolf Steiner, and Russell Wheeler Davenport. The School has followed Western educational ideas to guide children's development and learning process; these five theoretical and philosophical sources have provided a guideline and principles for the School to build up the structure of the curriculum.

Chinese Cultural Tradition

China has had 2000 years of agricultural history which present how the Chinese live with nature and overcome the challenges of life. Mr. Zeng said:

Festivals are defined as 'cultural space', being primarily a cultural phenomenon. Culture is not only the soul of a festival, but also the soul of people. Every cultural festival is an indicator of people's mark in history, a key aspect of that group. Festivals play an important role in the growth of children because they are the essence of civilization and cultural spirit.
(06.15.2010)

This statement clearly claims that the School has faith in cultural events which are the essence of civilization and cultural spirit and important for children's growth. In other words, Chinese cultural tradition was incorporated into the principles of the Natural Way School. Thus the educational philosophy of the Natural Way School and its roots in Chinese culture are based on fundamental Chinese philosophy, thoughts, religions, values, virtues, and life style; Mr. Zeng said:

I developed my concept of Chinese tradition from the philosophies of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It is like a tripod on which I would like to ground our educational philosophy. The three main ideas are "Put the heart and soul into recognizing human nature" from Confucianism; "Refine the heart and soul to perceive human nature" from Buddhism;

“Empty the heart and soul to resemble human nature [original]” from Taoism. (06.15.10)

Because the Natural Way School wants to become a unique school different from other schools, the educational philosophy of the School strongly adheres to thoughts of Chinese philosophy, which are grounded in Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The philosophers Confucius and Lao-Zi are recognized more than the others because of their voice and perspective as expressed in *Analects* and *Tao-Te-Ching*, and through a deep interaction with culture, history, nature, and life experience which has greatly impacted Chinese culture. The Natural Way School is grounded to utilize those ideas and philosophy as the School’s educational philosophy.

To Cultivate Children’s Minds to Possess Chinese Virtues

The bilingual program of the Natural Way School for preschool/kindergarten is based on the school’s educational philosophy which includes Western and Eastern educational philosophy. Yet, learning Chinese virtues is a very important principle in the school. The school exists to ensure that all students can practice the Chinese virtues of filial piety, proper behavior, humility, loyalty, love, harmony, respect, righteousness, humanity, trust, courage, endurance, patience, perseverance, and strives to combine these virtues into the skills and knowledge incorporated into all kinds of activities. Chinese virtues are integrated into the daily activities and events of the school, through such practices as recital of classical Chinese poems, celebrating Chinese activities, **wearing** school uniforms, and eating daily meals, all of which are systematically performed Chinese virtues in practice. For example, the school’s uniforms help children learn to focus their attention on group unity rather than on individual differences meant t the uniforms are to help children acquire the virtue of humility. Another example is that

in the School all students must take a bow and greet the teachers before lessons. The purpose of this practice is to reinforce the virtues of respect and proper behavior for appreciation.

The 24 Chinese solar terms serve as the core of the curriculum. Integrative and thematic planning is solidly based in Chinese culture. Flexible language is used, usually the language that seems most appropriate, and a strong Chinese and English vocabulary base is evident. For example, the children learn stories such as “The twenty-four Stories of Filial Piety” taught in English by both the foreign teachers and Chinese teachers working together. Chinese people typically emphasize filial piety. A Chinese proverb says: “Of one hundred virtues, filial piety is the priority.” Chinese people believe that charity begins at home. Endurance, another virtue, is also appreciated in current traditional Chinese society, represented by the Chinese belief that plum-flowers cannot blossom in the spring without having encountered the crucial cold of winter. The School’s faculty and administrators believe that children, too, should go through hardship; then, they can become responsible people and truly appreciate happiness. Since filial piety and endurance are not emphasized in the Western culture to the same degree, foreign teachers are learning to appreciate these qualities alongside the children. In turn, the foreign teachers then help the children develop the English vocabulary to express ideas related to them.

No Single Educational Mode Fits All Children

Mr. Zeng is an idealist who believes no one single educational mode fits all children. Based on the above mentioned Chinese philosophy and Western learning philosophy, he believes education should follow each child’s nature in order to meet the needs of the child. Thus, the School’s educational philosophy does not dogmatically

copy or emulate any one idealized program (Spodek, 1973). Instead it derives some elements from all these models to meet the School's needs. In the interview (2006), Mr.

Zeng said:

When the Western education focus on human psychological/cognitive development is taken into serious introspection, Eastern philosophies such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, provide a new perspective to education for humanity, human nature, and human development. This new perspective seems to open a door for the integration of Eastern and Western philosophies to merge into a unique mold of schooling that is appropriate for Chinese children. Thus, I desire to find ideas and methods from Chinese literary tradition (03.23.06)

Mr. Zeng thinks that although the Western world has well-developed educational theories and philosophy, the educational philosophy of the Eastern world is equally valuable. Therefore, the School's educational and philosophical framework is derived from a number of theories of Eastern and Western philosophers.

Family Education Is Just as Important as School Education

Every teacher at the School must have knowledge of cognitive and psychological development. They must understand that learning should progress from simple to complex, concrete to abstract, and imitation to creating, and these progressions should be demonstrated in teachers' lesson plans. A kindergarten Chinese teacher said:

The School requires all homeroom teachers to visit their own students' family 1-2 times a year. The schedules of home visits usually are arranged at the very beginning of the school year. We know we have to put a lot of effort into home visits, such as recording our observations, designing interview questions, and finding time to do home visits. Actually, my first semester, I was upset about this requirement; however, when I recalled what I learned from the teacher's college, I understood the home visit is an avenue to help us understand students. The impact of the home is as important as influence of the school. Moreover, we knew the 'story of Mencius and his mother moving three times.' Mencius' mother moved three times because of the influences of the environment. Firstly, moving to a home near a cemetery tomb, and then from a tomb to a market, and finally from a market to a school. I knew the development of personality and learning are robustly determined by social context and social interaction.

Thus, although home visits take a lot of time, we feel each visit is worthwhile because the understanding of the child's background helps us to know the individuals and teach them better. It's worth the effort and time put into this endeavor. (06.17.10)

The School believes that family education plays an important role in virtue learning. According to *Analects* of Confucius, the School provides a story about family education: One day Confucius met his son in the living room. The Father immediately asked his son if he learns both poetry and rites. Confucius said, "If a person does not learn poetry, he will not be able to talk", "if a person does learn rites, he will never be well footed in the society." The son nodded his head. The story shows that family education takes place any moment in the home. Home visits can provide teachers with baseline records and information on every child, which helps the teachers to understand each child's learning context and family education. Also, home visits demonstrate how the School believes in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, in which Vygotsky (1978) suggests that social interaction and context influence the children's learning. In order to know the children's home environment and family education, home visits are required.

The Interactive Is More Effective Than the Transmission Approach

Teachers are encouraged to design reciprocal lesson-plans or activities because the School believes that learning with both a hands-on approach and group interaction can give children more first-hand experience and learning that is more effective than direct spoon-fed instruction of "sit still and listen" (Dewey 1938). A curriculum administrator said:

My major job is to support classroom teachers who need me to assist their activities. For example, preparing materials, assisting in the activities, supervising children's behaviors, interacting with children, etc... anyway, I always stand-by for teachers' needs because many classroom activities need adults to help the students with their work (06.25.10).

Since most of the lessons are embedded in an interactive and hands-on process rather than textbook-based approach, the School provides the space and supporting system for children to work in groups or as individuals with teachers' supervision and guidance. The cooperation and problem-solving experiences can give children a voice, and also the group activities foster intellectual and social skill development (Catron & Allen, 1999). This philosophy is adopted from Dewey (1859-1952), Vygotsky (1978) and Wang Yangming (1472-1529). Dewey (1859-1952) claimed children should learn by actively doing physical and intellectual activities which are based on the children's interests, needs, and abilities. Vygotsky (1978) suggested that children acquire their ways of thinking and behaving in cooperative dialogues between children and adults, when they are doing activities. Wang Yangming, Chinese philosopher, also asserted "knowledge as action"--- knowledge and action are cohered as one. Moreover, the "Ultimate Sage and Foremost Master" , Confucius (551 BC-479 BC), stated that practice, experience, and accomplishment of work are more important than the knowledge found in books. Confucius' student Zi-Xia, pointed out "the artisan, in any of hundreds of crafts, manipulates his handwork by continually practicing in his workshop" (Article 19, *Analects*). According to these philosophers' ideas, the School advocates the provision of hands-on activities in order for the children to acquire life experience and abilities, and believes that learning is not only from textbooks, but also from participating in activities which can help children develop intelligence, communication, and physical, emotional, and personal awareness.

A Balanced Approach to Develop a Whole Child in the Western Perspective

In Taiwan, Montessori is a very popular mode for early childhood education. Montessori's method was usually used to emphasize sensory-motor, intellectual,

language, and moral development. The Natural Way School agrees with Montessori's idea that sensory education can help children learn basic academic skills which include language, muscular control, math, and sensory perception. However, Montessori provides commercial materials and equipment to simulate children, in which children are encouraged to participate in self-disciplined, self-directed and independent ways without interaction between children and teachers/adults. The use commercial materials without interaction totally conflict with the philosophy of the Natural Way School. While some educational materials of Montessori are used to provide development of the children's ability, to balance and enrich children's learning the School highly appreciates the Reggio Emilia approach --- "things about children and for children are only learned from children," (Edwards, 1993, pp.43-44). With this approach children's ideas and experience become a foundation of the curriculum. Reggio Emilia does not depend upon any commercial materials for learning but emphasizes children using imagination to create or accomplish things through all their "languages" in their own learning process in which children present diverse means to express themselves. Maria, a homeroom teacher, said:

In the classroom, there are some Montessori manipulative materials for children to learn math. This school does not force teachers to let children operate them every day. It is flexible and allows children to choose their favorite activity centers. Some children are willing to go to Montessori's center to individually operate materials; some children want to go the creative center where they can play together in, for example, role-play and hands-on activities (06.28.10)

The aesthetic aspect of the Reggio Emilia approach reflects the School's philosophy concerning children's work. Indeed, Montessori's and Reggio Emilia's ideas are different but they are applied for different purposes within the school's curriculum. In other words, the School achieves 'a whole person' learning, which covers the physical,

social-emotional, and cognitive domains and helps each child become a whole child in the Western perspective.

Not Limited in Any Theories or Modes to Reach Each Child's Potential

Mr. Zeng insists that the Western and Eastern philosophies should be selected to achieve the school's mission and philosophy. The School accepts Froebel's, Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophical pedagogy of Waldorf education out of Germany, Italian Montessori and Reggio Emilia's pedagogies, and Piaget's, Vygotsky's, and Dewey's educational philosophies. Thus, the School develops its own eclectic educational philosophy, and opens all possibilities to each child. Zeng said:

The West has well-developed educational and psychological theories that can concur with our ancient educational ideas. But, although those are well-developed educational theories, I do not want our education limited by particular ideas that restrain our children's possibility. That's why... based on Chinese philosophy, culture, and Chinese literary tradition, I combine German, Italian, and American educational philosophy to form our school's philosophical foundation (06.30.10).

Mr. Zeng does not want to "use particular ideas to limit children's possibility". In other words, the School tries to give children freedom to learn. I found the School combines and modifies some theories and philosophies and turns them into parts of the School's philosophy. For example, the School agrees with Froebel's philosophy of education which considers that children need hands-on play for aesthetics, life, and mathematics education; this philosophy is implemented through such activities as origami, geometric building blocks, singing, and gardening so that children benefit by manipulating materials combined with adult intervention. Although the School recognizes the benefits of hands-on play for children, it also realizes that too many activities imposed on children can interfere in their learning. On the other hand, Steiner's anthroposophical philosophy of Waldorf education emphasizes that young

children's learning should be released from any forms of materials. As a result, the School also employs Steiner's anthroposophical philosophy of Waldorf education and considers hands-on play not just for physical and intellectual purposes, but also to open children to all possibilities.

To summarize the School's philosophy, the School believes that to cultivate a liberated child and help him/her reach his/her potential, the lessons and activities need to consider a whole child's mind and spiritual development, not just physical and intellectual.

Learning from Natural Phenomena

The name of the School in Chinese is 道禾 which means grain grows up naturally and is nourished by Mother Nature. Thus, another educational principle of the Natural Way School is powerfully influenced by Chinese culture and the Chinese belief that Mother Nature nourishes creatures persistently. Mother Nature is human being's instructor and supplier. Confucius said, "What does Heaven [i.e. a supreme supernatural power] ever say? Yet there are four seasons going round and there are hundreds of things coming into being. What does Heaven ever say (Yi-Po-Juen,2009). The Chinese nation was based on agriculture for two thousand years. The Chinese feel closely connected to nature, but they also stand in awe of nature; in spite of this, the Chinese live in peace and harmony together with nature. By observing, understanding, feeling, and living with nature, the Chinese admire principles and phenomena of nature, in which the cycle of four seasons and the changes of solar terms are intertwined in Chinese daily life. The Chinese people recognize twenty-four solar terms which reflect the changes of natural phenomena and climate, the relationship between living beings

and the seasons, and agricultural instruction. The Natural Way School emphasizes this aspect and integrates it into the curriculum. From the Eastern educational perspective of the School, the purpose of learning the twenty-four solar terms is not merely academic but also builds a close relationship with nature. In other words, learning is not only facilitated by receiving knowledge from nature, but also benefits when the harmonious person interacts with nature in a tranquil balance and ecological context.

Teaching Students without Any Discrimination

Mr. Zeng maintains the School is not textbook-driven, model-driven, or teacher-centered. He said: “This school is student-centered where every child is treated equally and teaching strives to meet individual needs.” The Natural Way School believes Confucius’ (Confucius, 551-478 BC) words: “Teaching is to reach all despite the learners’ background and abilities (*The Article*, 15).” This means that no matter what the children’s backgrounds, they are teachable. The School agrees with Confucius and considers that every child can learn and make progress to reach high levels based on his/her learning styles and ability. There is no discrimination or ranking and everyone’s learning process can be accepted and respected.

Differentiated Instruction to Meet Individual Students’ Needs

According to the curriculum design of the School, although the School presents learning objectives as goals for teachers to design lessons and activities, the thematic approach of school curriculum is incorporated to allow flexibility for teachers and students to develop learning together. Teachers do not use traditional assessment tools to measure students’ progress. The School employs multiple methods to conduct assessment and evaluation, such as portfolios, projects, or multiple-evaluation games rather than relying on testing scores to assess students’ learning progress. However,

these assessment methods are not always accepted by parents with Chinese traditional values, who would like to see test scores and compare these children with others. One of kindergarten teacher stated:

I spent a lot of time explaining to parents how we assess students' learning, but some parents still do not believe it. They trust the scores (numbers) only. They would like to know how well their children learn in comparison with others. However, this is contrary to the School's educational philosophy. We do not rank children with tests. Usually, we do observation and assess students' work individually. The School offers us this kind of training on assessment and evaluation. They are helpful (07.02.10).

In this school, Chinese teachers are required to read the "*Xue Ji*", one chapter of a classic Chinese book about teaching and learning methods from the Confucian perspective. The *Xue Ji* says,

A teacher cannot be a qualified if he only asks students to repeat what they memorize. It's necessary that he listens to his students [to develop a theory on confusion]. When a student is unable to formulate a question, the teacher needs to give guidance. After the teacher's assistance, if the student is still not able to understand the subject, the teacher should leave the student alone temporarily. (*Liji*)

Mr. Zeng used these Confucian words to remind all teachers of the School that learning is like striking a bell. "If I knock the bell strongly, it echoes loudly; oppositely, if I knock it gently, it echoes slightly." In other words, teachers are like knockers and students are like bells. Knockers bang the bell strongly or gently depending on knockers' attitude (07.10.08). In the School, teachers have to recognize the children's abilities and intelligence and give appropriate instruction to meet students' needs.

Socially-Culturally Embedded Instruction

Based on curriculum, all lessons are within themes presented through a variety of activities related to themes derived from Chinese culture. Maria, a Chinese teacher at the School, mentioned:

In the preschool bilingual program, storytelling, hands-on activities, games, singing songs, and theme projects are conducted in meaningful ways in which teachers and students immerse themselves in the context of projects and work together. For example, during the moon festival, we recite the Chinese classic poem about the moon, play pomelo-lantern, and eat moon cakes we made for celebrating the Moon festival (06.17.10)

Mr. Zeng confirmed this practice by saying, “We support teachers to design the lessons in meaningful contexts. We believe in the ideas of Vygotsky (1986) and Confucius (551-478 BC). In the *Analects* Confucius (551-478 BC) talked about the contents of teaching. The major subjects should be taught: culture, morality, loyalty, and trust (*The Analects*, 7).” Mr. Zeng believes strongly that bilingual children should be raised with their own culture and history. In other words, bilingual children’s learning should be closely connected with the real world and real people, which includes studying history and literature, and participating in social activities with adult guidance. This belief is compatible with Vygotsky’s ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), the cultivation of good intentions toward others, and having faith in people. The School’s faculty and administrators value these concepts of learning and emphasize the School’s learning cannot be disconnected from the real world.

Teaching Students to Gain Rich Traditional Literacy

In the School, students in bilingual program also learn classical Chinese poetry *Three Hundred Tang Poems* and classic Chinese rhythms such as *Three Character Classic*. They are important treasures of Chinese literary tradition. Curtain (1994) said: “Learning poetry is the most appealing and effective entry into language and culture. Children learning poetry has the double benefit of giving children experience with an important dimension of culture and helping them to internalize the vocabulary, rhythms, and structures of language” (Curtain, 1994 p. 162). The Chinese people believe poems

make it possible for people to be good at using metaphor in language like a poet, be observant in nature, echo with others, and express sorrow (*Article*, 8). Therefore, the Chinese believe that educated people should know how to appreciate poetry reading and writing because they believe that without poetry learning, they do not have sufficient humanities cultivation to communicate with others. Confucius (551-478 BC) said “Be stimulated by the Odes, take your stand through the help of the rites and be perfected by music (*Article*, 8).” He emphasized that poetry, rites, and music refine a person’s attitude and manner, rendering him/her suitable for traditional Chinese society. Joan, a Chinese teacher, also said:

Sometimes, the School provides the children rhythms and rhymes in Taiwanese or from *Three Hundred Poems of Tang Collections* in Chinese, which more or less are related to the themes of the curriculum. We let children recite them in the morning and even in the afternoon after nap (07.02.10).

Chinese teachers recite Chinese classic poems or rhymes. The children naturally repeat after the teachers. I ask them what it means. The children always smile and say: “I don’t know.” However, I am also required to teach one poem a week. Usually, I select poems from English rhymes, rhythms, or Mother Goose. Of course, I do explain them. Sometimes, the School also provides some poems or songs in English from Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). We read poems or sing songs aloud when we are transitioning from one place to another or one activity to another (06.18.10).

In the bilingual program, the School not only provides English poetry, rhymes, and songs for students, but also along within the Chinese literary tradition, the School puts much effort into cultivating good attitudes and manners from the Chinese perspective through poetry, rites, and music in curriculum.

Scaffolding Learning Systematically

The School believes the element of culture plays a significant role in the bilingual context. Thus, the curriculum must be planned carefully and in great detail (Curtain,

1994). Bilingual and bi-literate learning has to proceed in an orderly and successive way. Research in the area of curriculum theories (Wortham,1998,Tanner and Tanner, 1980, and Schwarz and Robison,1982) has repeatedly stressed the importance of instruction in an orderly and successive way. The Natural Way School realizes curriculum design should be sequential and consistent, a practice which is adopted from the ideas from *Xue Ji*, the first article written 2000 years ago about teaching and learning. Examples of these practices include:

In the first year it is seen if students can read the texts wisely and know what the meaning of texts is; in the third year, it is seen if students can be responsible and explorative to their study and know what companionship is most pleasant to them; in the fifth year. . . . (*Xue Ji*)

The varied forms of assessment show learning scope and sequence have effective results. In the School's teacher training, teachers are required to study *Xue Ji's* philosophy and all teachers then use this philosophy to design the lesson plans.

However, there is a small struggle mentioned by Chinese teachers. They said Chinese philosophy is quite difficult to understand. If they can not exactly figure out the implication, they can not apply it in the classroom. One teacher, Kate, gave an example. She was trying hard to decide which scope and sequence was just right for her students to learn. She reflected that one of the classic books, Mencius (385-303BCE), asserts:

The Heaven would like to give a person great responsibility, it first makes his mind endure suffering, burdens his physical being, and knocks down everything he tries to build. . . . In this way, Heaven stimulates his mind, stabilizes his temper, and improves him. (*Meng Zi*, "Gao Zi" 385-303 BCE).

Moreover, Confucius said "Can you love anyone without making him work hard? Can you do your best for anyone without challenging him?" (*Article 14*) This belief is very common in Chinese educational contexts. Most Chinese believe there is no gain without pain and learning cannot be achieved without effort. As teachers, they should

give students reasonable challenge to build up their abilities. Thus, two ideas of Chinese philosophy seem to conflict superficially. One of teachers asked the question about how to push children to speak English and learn more written Chinese, and yet at the same time implement the philosophy of the School: learning in an orderly and successive way. She and other teachers were confused about how much challenge they could give children without destroying students' confidence. Finally, in the teachers meeting, the ZPD theory of Vygotsky (1986, 1978) was discussed as an instrument in shaping the teaching method for balance to avoid over-teaching or under-teaching or over-expectations or under-expectations.

Overall, the educational philosophy of the School insists teachers in the bilingual program do not overwhelm students in language learning or subjects because that would transgress the order of students' learning. By staying with the order of individual progress, teachers respect each child's potential and learning style thus giving the student appropriate instructions to help him/her become a problem solver and know how to persist through the process of solving problems within his/her appropriate range.

Self-Initiated Learning Is the Most Effective Learning

Most language teaching gives insight into a variety of cultures, including arts, food, and elements of customs. The bilingual program of the School provides culturally authentic situations which enhance positive, self-initiated learning. The Reggio Emilia approach believes young children are inquisitive and should be enthusiastically involved in learning based on their interests through exploration and discovery in a helpful, inspiring and authentic environmental situation. The theory of the Reggio approach is noted in the School's curriculum design. Mr. Zeng of the School always repeats the Reggio approach in the School's curriculum meetings: "the School's activities and

lessons must be based on children's interests and culturally authentic situations."

Investigation of the theory of the Reggio approach reveals it reflects a theoretical kinship with the theories of Vygotsky's social interactions and Piaget's self-initiated discovery, in which children's language and ability develop from mutual interaction in cultural contexts of their own interests. Correspondingly, Chinese educational philosopher Confucius said:

I never enlighten anyone who was not been driven to distraction by trying to understand a challenging issue or who had not gotten into a frenzy trying to put his ideas into words. When I have pointed out one corner of a square to anyone and he does not respond with the other three, there is no point to continue the learning. (*Article 7*)

Confucius used a metaphor to describe teaching and learning and claimed that learning is not imposed but rather is self-initiated. Overall, the School presents Confucius's, Vygotsky's, and Piaget's education philosophies that learning should be based on students' self interest within culturally authentic situations and not suppress students' learning appetite by a teacher's own enthusiasm. If students are not ready to learn, teachers have to wait and leave them alone.

Good Teachers Can Help Bilingual Students Engage in Learning with a Positive Attitude

Mr. Zeng used a metaphor about learning from *Xue Ji*, "a good singer can engage people with his/her unforgettable voice and make them continue the melody." Mr. Zeng used this metaphor to emphasize learning engagement and encourage teachers to pass their passion on to students. The School believes that a good teacher should have knowledge about who they teach, what they teach, and how they teach, so they know how to enable students to become engaged and continue the learning teachers began. Moreover students in the bilingual program are learning two languages and about two

cultures simultaneously; therefore, the School does not want to stress the outcome such as passing English exams, but rather stress the process of teaching and learning so the students develop a positive attitude toward bilingual learning. The School assumes that teachers should not introduce prejudice into their language teaching because it believes if children have an unfortunate experience; the experience causes children to develop prejudices toward language and cultural learning. For example, a child might think, “I cannot speak English because it is difficult or I can speak English because I am special.” Teachers use every naturally occurring communicative situation to give every student positive direction, discipline, and opportunity. A senior administrator of curriculum discussed a curriculum award, “There is the Highest Award of Theme Activities Design once a semester. All teachers have to demonstrate their lesson-plans for this competition. The award is the highest honor for the best teachers showing their favorite lesson-plans. The School selects the best one as a role model for other teachers (07.15.10).”

Mr. Zeng said although the Award is a kind of competition, its purpose is to provide opportunities for teachers to emulate other teachers who are better than themselves. It tells teachers in bilingual program not to feel obligated to restrict English to classroom use. Teachers enrich the language environment and surround the activity of the classroom with English and Chinese. Instead of having vocabulary and sentence-pattern drills, they provide an initial period when children are not ready to respond. Thus, during this period, children are encouraged to participate in activities rather than produce language.

A Belief in the Learning Potential of All Children

An important concept of the School for bilingual teachers is to incorporate language and cultural contexts into the general category of concrete experience, because bilingual education has to reach out to others across cultural and linguistic boundaries. The children's most important link to the world around them is people interacting with people. Thus, teachers in the bilingual program of the School are reminded that learning language and culture not only takes place inside the classroom, but also through activities outside of the classroom such as field trips, the staging of dramas, and activities in the library, art lab or on the playground... at any moment and around any corner. Jessica, a foreign teacher from America, said,

I like the Natural Way School because it is not a traditional school or bu-xi-ban (cram school). . . . It is an 'open' school (07.02, 2010).

In the bilingual program of the School, foreign and Chinese teachers have to stay with the children all day long. Mr. Zeng said,

This school does not mind paying higher salaries for foreign teachers to keep them with children all day long because I believe language learning is immersed in contexts with people (Vygotsky, 1978). There is no limitation of children's potential (06.16.2010).

Also, Mr. Zeng agrees with Confucius' words "Men are close to one another by nature. They drift apart through behavior that differs" (*The Analects*, 17). He indicates that the influence of the social and physical environments is crucial for children; teachers have to be a role model for children all the time; thus, they should behave well in front of children. The Chinese influenced by Confucius, consider that "Whenever walking in the company of two others, I am bound to be able to learn from them. I copy strength from the one; I avoid making errors of the other (*The Analects*, 7)." Good and bad influences could happen with anyone, at any moment, and in any place. Children

are fast learners, absorbing learning like a sponge. The School believes that any actions and words children can see and hear can be automatically learned or imitated by them. Thus, teaching and learning is not confined to the classroom, but also occurs in the social environment of the children.

Hold in Reverence with Learning Not Inquiry

In the bilingual program, Chinese teachers believe that as teachers, they have to receive great respect, only then can the content taught by them be valued. On the other hand, foreign teachers consider that inquiry is necessary for learning and they encourage students to query. Maria, a senior administrator and a previous homeroom teacher, said,

I was a Chinese teacher in bilingual program, but my current position is the assistant chair. I know now my job is different from the previous one. I was used to being supported by the School. But now, I have to physically and emotionally support and respect my colleagues who work with students. I help teachers to gain confidence and knowledge in teaching so they can give young children security, reliance, and confidence. Like saying in the “*Xue Ji*”, “in all subjects of learning, the goal is a teacher with high expectation for students, when that is done, the subject is deemed with honor. When that is done, the people know how to respect learning.” Mr. Wang, the consultant of the School, gave us lectures about *Xui-Ji*. He said “teachers need to have high expectations for their students.

Overall, this belief is not about teaching methods, but about the relationship between teachers’ and students’ attitudes. It is an important philosophy for teachers.

Conclusion

I have presented a framework for understanding the educational philosophy of the bilingual program of the Natural Way School. This framework is based on documents, classroom observations, and interviews of the founder, teachers, and administrators. The uniqueness of the School is that it is grounded with both Western and Eastern educational philosophy. Western educational philosophy provides the foundation of

educational theories, methods, and ideas, which affords more practice and experience. This philosophy extends from the experimental research of John Dewey (1859-1952), Piaget (1896-1980), and Vygotsky (1896-1934). The School believes strongly that classroom practice must be built on a basic understanding of experimental and theoretical philosophy which helps teachers know what they have to teach, why they have to teach, and how they have to teach. Based on an understanding of theoretical concepts and methodology, it can empower teachers to be effective planners of the school curricula.

The Chinese culture, Chinese educational philosophy, and Chinese literary traditions also have great impact on the development of the philosophy of the School. Since the Natural Way School was founded in 1999, the School has consistently invited several Neo-Confucianism scholars to give the teachers lectures once a month. In the past 12 years, teachers studied *Analects*, *Great Learning*, *Classic of Rites*, and *Three Hundred Poems*. The lectures were focused on Chinese philosophy, beliefs, and traditions, which help shape teachers' values and curriculum design. Mr. Zeng said:

For a century, taking a close look at our current educational environment, we have seen that ideas, thoughts, life styles, values, and cultures of the West powerfully have shaped our education. The Western ideas of education have strongly influenced Chinese education in Taiwan. I think the Taiwanese have given too much attention to the Western methods of education, and have given up its own long tradition and rich culture which laid a foundation of its literary tradition. Although Western education enriches Chinese education, Chinese education appears to be losing its mission and purpose, and has become an educational colony in which Chinese education has no self-identity and independence.... Thus, when I established the Natural Way School, I always thought about what is my school's philosophy? What should we teach children? What will they be? Currently, we see a lot of kindergartens in Taichung which are called Montessori School, Reggio School, Waldorf School, or Frobel School. But I do not want the Natural Way School to be named after any philosophy or any mold of the West. I want my school to not only educate students to

acquire knowledge for modern society, but also I want my school to represent a real Taiwanese (Chinese) school which is based on our culture, values, and the world of our people's lives (06.30.10).

As Mr. Zeng said, the philosophy and ideas of current education in Taiwan are mostly adopted from Western education. Thus, when English education spreads out in Taiwan, Mr. Zeng doesn't want his school to become another 'American' English school that is detached from Chinese educational philosophy. Mr. Zeng explicitly explained his thoughts about education. He recited Robert Frost's poem: "The Road Not Taken." He recited:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

The Western educational influences are taken for granted in this school. The Western educational philosophy and English learning are not inevitable pressures on the School's individualism. Although the School has been struggling with the Western influences, it puts much effort into developing an environment based on Chinese culture and Chinese educational philosophy, and seeks a balance of the Western and Eastern. However, to balance the Western and the Eastern, the curriculum is not divided into two halves, one half about the Western and the other half about the Eastern, nor does it split learning hours in two parts, one part for each; to balance the Western and Eastern is to harmonize cultures, ideas, values, and languages in a bi-cultural and bilingual environment. It is about why teachers teach, what teachers teach, and how teachers teach. The School's philosophy is embedded in the school's curriculum and events

rather than in the concrete materials or textbooks, so as to help students develop bi-literacy, and become bilingual and bicultural.

Overall, the educational philosophy of the Natural Way School is to pursue a balanced way of education for the children in the bilingual program, which is the middle path, an eclectic approach. It adopts and modifies from both Chinese philosophy and Western educational philosophy and theories in order to better meet the goals of the School. In one word, the School is not only to pursue a harmony of cultural and independent educational ideas, but the most important goal is to educate the children for a globalized society with its own tradition and culture.

CHAPTER 5 CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PRACTICE

Educational philosophy presents the values and beliefs of schools. Hence, to understand if the School really follows their beliefs to operate a school, we should investigate the School's curriculum because philosophy and values should be conducted and demonstrated in the contents of curriculum. This chapter investigates the curriculum of the bilingual program of the Natural Way School. It not only describes a linear sequence of events which includes objectives, contents, activities, circumstances of the School, and the daily schedules of the bilingual program, but also investigates how the School constructs the curriculum of the bilingual program in order to reflect its philosophy and values.

Taking a close look at the philosophy of the School, I found that Chinese culture and Chinese literary tradition were emphasized and integrated with Western educational philosophy. In other words, although some beliefs and ideas initially came from Western educational philosophy, they are all integrated with Chinese philosophy and are compatible from Chinese perspective. The School appreciates Confucius' ideas, Chinese virtues, and brings a Chinese awareness of natural phenomena. Chinese culture is a salient element in the philosophy of the School.

Thus, my field notes from semi-structured interviews and class observations examined the curriculum in three ways: 1) how the Chinese cultural and literary tradition are infused into the bilingual and bi-cultural curriculum 2) how the teachers exemplify Chinese educational philosophy in the bilingual and bi-cultural curriculum 3) how children develop their bilingual and bi-cultural competence in the bilingual environment.

Chinese Culture and Chinese Literary Traditions

Twenty-Four Chinese Solar Terms in the Chinese Literary Tradition

In the bilingual program, students are exposed to an English environment and communicate with English speaking instructors. English is learned through practice to attain personal goals in a natural and social way. Since children constantly are encouraged to test hypotheses, errors are seen as a part of learning; English occurs through purposeful use and is acquired efficiently. Another important factor influencing the development of English language proficiency is the amount of time spent working on English (Curtain, 1994). On the other hand, Chinese language learning is squeezed into a small amount of time and can easily be ignored.

However, the School strives hard to balance Chinese and English learning in the bilingual curriculum program. Mr. Zeng said: “Our culture cannot be limited to one subject. It should represent our people’s living and values. Obviously, our ancestors used the Chinese twenty-four solar terms as a guide to live with nature. The twenty-four solar terms can represent our old ancestors’ wisdom and values (07.11.10).” Thus, the twenty-four Chinese solar terms are an essential part of the curriculum and help to balance Chinese and English learning. The twenty-four Chinese solar terms represent the lifestyle of the Chinese people, showing what they eat and wear and how they live, play, celebrate, and move. The founder of the School, Mr. Zeng, said “The curriculum of the School is based on the Chinese lifestyle. We want our children to understand the way our people live. They need to learn their cultural heritage; then they can appreciate it” (07.11.10). In other words, the twenty-four Chinese solar terms are the curriculum of the Natural Way School. The School follows the West’s early childhood pedagogical methods and concepts in its design of all learning content, including language, literacy,

science, math, social studies, movement, drama, music, arts, and physical skills. Yet, all subjects are integrated and learned within themes based on the twenty-four solar terms.

The curriculum consists of twelve themes over a year and each theme focuses upon two profound characteristic solar terms (*Jie Qi*). In other words, the School develops a whole year's thematic learning according to 24 Chinese solar terms. These include: January's New Year which presents the Chinese New Year with two solar terms, Slight Cold and Great Cold. February's Farming presents spring coming with two solar terms, Spring Beginning and Rain Water. March's Spring presents awakened creatures in spring with two solar terms, Insects Awaken and Vernal Equinox. April's Spring Wind presents activities in spring with two solar terms, Pure Brightness and Grain Rains. May's Love presents love and intimacy with two solar terms, Beginning of Summer and Grain Full. June's Dragon Boat presents insects in summer with two solar terms, Grain in ear and Summer Solstice. July's Water presents plants in the summer with two solar terms, Slight Heat and Great Heat. August's Summer presents the beginning of autumn with two solar terms, Beginning of Autumn and Heat's End. September's Fall presents Mid-autumn festival and activities in natural field with two solar terms, White Dew and Autumnal equinox. October's Harvest presents food and Halloween with two solar terms, Hoar Frost and Descending. November's Mother Earth presents thankful heart to Mother Earth with two solar terms, Beginning of winter and Slight Snow. December's Winter presents Christmas and winter solstice with two solar terms, Heavy Snow and Winter Solstice

The following is an outline of the year's themes, in chronological order. Teachers follow the thematic topics over the course of the year.

Table 5-1. Thematic Topics

Month/Solar Term	Theme	Objectives	School's Events
January: Slight Cold/ Great Cold	New Year	New Year New Calendar Introduce new students The Lunar New Year Festival	Reunion Lunch Lion Dancing
February: Spring Beginning/ Rain Water	Farming	Stories of the Lantern Festival/Valentine's The Lunar New Year Farming: seeding	Lantern Festival Valentine's Day
March: Insects Awaken/ Vernal Equinox	Spring	Food, animals, and plants of spring Human life in spring	Breakfast meeting with parents
April: Pure Brightness/ Grain Rains	Spring Wind	Stories of Tomb Sweeping Stories of Easter Sports and healthy exercise	Easter activities Drama play Song/poem activities
May: Beginning of Summer/ Grain Full	Love	Loves/Intimacy Family I/Me/Myself	Sports' Day Mother's Day
June: Grain in ear/Summer Solstice	Festival	Dragon Boat Festival Insects in summer	Festival Multi-purpose Evaluation
July: Slight Heat/Great Heat	Water	Plants/flowers in the summer Cherish the time to get together here	Graduation Ceremony Shadow Play
August: Beginning of Autumn/Heat's End	Summer	Build rapport and trust between teachers and new students Relationships School environment Chinese Valentine's Day	Open house
September: White Dew/Autumnal Equinox	Autumn	Mid-autumn festival celebration Activities in autumn Teacher appreciation	Teacher's Day Mid-autumn Festival
October: Cold Dew/ Frost Descending	Harvest	Stories of Halloween Rice/Chinese food Various cuisines of the world	Halloween Rice Festival
November: Winter Begins/Slight Snow	Mother Earth	Mother Earth: love and gratitude Thankful heart	Thanksgiving Drama play Art fair
December: Heavy Snow/Winter Solstice	Winter	Christmas Preparation for winter solstice Assessment	Multi-purpose evaluation Winter Solstice Christmas

The above curriculum outline was designed by the academic committee of the School and provides an overview of the curriculum. The 12 themes are based on the traditional Chinese twenty-four solar terms. The twenty-four solar terms present different natural phenomena at appropriate times during the year. The Chinese follow the natural phenomena in order to better fend for themselves; the Chinese calendar showed when to plant, when to eat, when to play, when to rest, when to move, when to wear particular clothing, and when to work according to twenty-four solar terms.

For example: during the Winter Solstice of December, the curriculum focuses on Chinese preparations for winter coming, including food preservation (science and math), winter clothing (math and science), and activities in winter such as decorating the house for a family reunion (social studies, language, and arts). Another example: during Pure Brighten and Grain Rains of April, the curriculum focuses on outdoor activities, the weather, and natural scene. It talks about Chinese people's tomb sweeping activity in this solar term as well as integrating a Western Easter activity (it is integrated with the curriculum because it is compatible from the Chinese solar terms perspective). The two activities not only allow children to learn Chinese and Western customs and cultures, but also provide children opportunity to experience nature changes, appreciate nature scenes of the spring, and do outdoor exercises in the best weather of the year.

In the curriculum, six themes out of the twelve are related to Chinese festivals/events and the English instructors need the Chinese instructors to help provide enrichment of the teaching content and to translate; an example of this teacher collaboration occurs during the Dragon Boat Festival. Effective instruction in this unit needs to tap into some background knowledge about Chinese history and the Chinese

language could be used to help the students gain a holistic understanding of the Dragon Boat Festival; this history might be most effectively taught by the Chinese teachers. A preschool Chinese teacher Carol said:

In our classrooms, you can hear Chinese and English. My students learn the themes of the school in English; however, when I think the children do not understand what the English teacher says, I will do a translation and speak Chinese to make sure children can follow the activity. Usually, after I help, the students learn the knowledge in Chinese and English (6.15.10).

The Natural Way School strives to balance Chinese and English learning. In order to balance the learning of both the Chinese and English languages the curriculum is based on the Chinese 24 solar terms which involve Chinese culture and literary tradition. The School sets up Chinese educational philosophy as playing a vital role in the school's teaching and learning principles, thus the School emphasizes teaching methods from Confucian educational perspectives. The curriculum is centered on 24 solar terms which follow Chinese educational philosophy and integrate all learning subjects (knowledge) of the Pre-K with Chinese cultural and literary traditions to balance Chinese and English learning. In order to reach the goals of the school, the teachers design lesson-plans and activities that subsume the philosophy of the school and their curriculum documents are based upon the 24 solar terms concepts for educating students in Chinese values and Chinese language in a meaningful, effective, systematic way.

Nature and Humanity in Twenty-Four Solar Terms

I found that only two month's themes out of the monthly themes are not directly related to the solar terms, these months are May's Love, and November's Mother Earth. May's and November's themes are about love and appreciation. The rest of themes relate to natural phenomena such as plants, insects, animals, flowers, and weather. The

spirituality of these themes precisely matches the idea that China has been a nation based on agriculture and that Chinese culture emphasizes natural phenomena because of farming. Five months' themes are universal themes; these are New Year, Spring Wind, Harvest, Mother Earth, and Winter. These themes talk about Western celebrations: New Years, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Interestingly, although five themes correlate with western celebrations, they still are attached to the Chinese solar terms. For example, Pure Brightness and Grain Rains of April, represent phenomena of spring. Egg hunting and Bunnies of Easter link up to spring activities and to when the spring wind blows over the field.

The characteristic elements of the 24 Chinese solar terms relate to two things: nature and culture. Natural phenomenon presents natural science from a Chinese perspective. Cultural events demonstrate the Chinese lifestyle, language, customs, and values. Students and teachers are encouraged to explore and experience Chinese culture in this bilingual curriculum. The activities involve many cultural experiences and natural science. Students learn how the four seasons change from a Chinese perspective; how Chinese culture is in harmony with nature; how the Chinese get along with one another; and how the Chinese celebrate festivals such as a family reunions.

Holidays and Festivals in the Twenty-Four Solar Terms

Holidays represent the cultural values of a society. Thus in this bilingual program school holidays and cultural traditions are used to nurture students in developing cultural understanding. I find that in the curriculum, six out of twelve themes are related to Chinese festivals/events such as January's Lunar Chinese New Year, February's Lantern Festival, April's Tomb Sweeping, June's Dragon Boat, August's Chinese Valentine's Day, and September's Moon Festival. On the other hand, six themes of

twelve months are related to Western festivals such as January's New Year, February's Valentine's Day, April's Easter, October's Halloween, November's Thanksgiving, and December's Christmas. The school involves the two culture's festivals equally. This provides opportunities for children to explore the differences.

One Chinese teacher mentioned that all Chinese holidays in Taiwan also are celebrated outside of the school; therefore, the school emphasizes their values and educational purposes. She gave an example, the Chinese Moon Festival. The school stresses the meaning and value of the Moon Festival. Children learn poems, stories, songs related to the moon in both English and Chinese and participate in traditional Chinese activities related to the Moon Festival. She also pointed out that children show curiosity about and interest in Western holidays because these holidays are fun, special, and unique to them and they feel no pressure from the Chinese teachers to find meaning and value in these holidays. The Western holidays help children to better understand their own culture when they make comparisons.

For example, eight of the eleven alumnae said their favorite holiday is Halloween.

Kate, a 15 year-old former student, said:

Halloween is so fun and not scary at all; oppositely, Chinese Ghost Day is very scary and fearful. We could not have fun like we did on Halloween; we had to take it more seriously. On Chinese Ghost Day (July 15 on the lunar calendar) it is believed ghosts go out from hell to catch bad-luck guys. Thus, we keep our distance but still respect them. Respect is shown by giving the Chinese ghosts reverence and preparing food for them (06.22.10).

Another former student, 16 years old, Sara said, I like all festivals, but my favorite is Halloween. I could make up to become any character I wanted. I could collect a lot of candies. It was so fun (11.07.10)!

Discussion of ghosts in Taiwan is a taboo for children because from an Eastern perspective they are feared. Although the curriculum of the school does not overly

emphasize Chinese ghosts and the School respects Confucius' saying: 'I do not talk about extraordinary negative things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings,' children naturally make comparisons. Since Halloween is not taboo, they figure out a point of view. These discussions can facilitate student thinking in the areas of science, logic, and self-awareness.

Family Values within the Twenty-Four Solar Terms

The twenty-four solar terms have gradually formed a collective consciousness and become traditional values. In collective consciousness, family values are deemed the most important. Thus, the curriculum of the school stresses family values within the themes of April and May, which include Pure Brightness, Grain Rains, and Beginning of Summer. These months have nice weather and are a good time for tomb sweeping and memorializing ancestors, so the school takes the opportunity to have students learn these concepts of Chinese family values.

An American instructor, Dan, said: "Chinese intensely emphasize 'family get-togethers' on all holidays." He also pointed out he was surprised that Tomb Sweeping is the most important of all memorial days, a day when all family members reunite to sweep tombs and worship ancestors together. Thus, once again, even though the language used in the bilingual program is English, the curriculum stresses Chinese cultural values. Children must learn the names of relatives, such as Ye-ye (father of the father's side), Nai-nai (mother of the father's side), Gu-gu (sisters of the father's side), Shu-shu (younger brother of the father's side), Pe-pe (older brother of the father's side), and Shen-shen (wife of older brother of the father's side) in Chinese. Mr. Dan indicated that in English, "aunts" may represent both the father's and mother's sides, but in Chinese, aunts cannot represent aunts from both sides of the family. Children in the

bilingual program become aware that they, too, have to be addressed with different names when they get together with relatives at 'family reunions' in Taiwan. This practice helps avoid confusion and helps children become aware of differences in language use.

Another important concept concerning family is the relationship between the individual and his/her family. The curriculum focuses on the individual and the family during May and November. Study of concepts such as self, siblings, parents, relatives, and friends help students learn about the closeness of the Chinese family. The family unit plays an important role in Chinese society. Family relationships are like a social web. Chinese people are always concerned about the family first. The self comes second. An individual's honors belong to the family, not to him or her alone; similarly, a personal failure is a family's failure. Children are taught that family values dominate individual values, which means no matter the magnitude of the success or the failure, it belongs to the family. Because family values are highlighted in the school's curriculum, "affection & intimacy" are parts of the content of the social studies subject. Children are taught about how to show love for your parents, how to love your siblings, and how to help your friends. A Chinese teacher, Maria, said

It is hard for my (American) co-teacher to understand Chinese filial piety. I checked the English-Chinese dictionary. I do not think the explanation in the English dictionary can fully express Chinese filial piety. I stress filial piety as the first priority of morals. Nothing is more important than filial piety. However, my co-teacher believes children need to learn to respect parents. In my class we discuss the ways we love parents. At last, the children design a coupon with five items such as "I hug my mother when my mother does something for me," "I say 'yes' to my mother all day," "I can clean my drawers to show my appreciation" and many students write about how they respect and obey their mothers (06.17.10).

Chinese family values play a dominant position in the curriculum, and are then reinforced and practiced in the daily life of Taiwan society.

Poetry, Rhythm, and Chinese Literary Traditions

The Chinese think poetry is the most appealing and effective literary entry point on the path to becoming an educated individual in Chinese society. Most Chinese encourage their children to recite Chinese classic poetry such as the *Tang Dynasty Three Hundred Poems* or rhythms such as the *Three Characters Classic*. Learning poetry has two benefits: 1) providing children with experience in the heritage of Chinese culture, and 2) helping children internalize the rhyme, rhythm, pronunciation, vocabulary, phrases, and structures of classic Chinese literature. Even in the bilingual program, poetry and rhythm play an important part in the curriculum. In the formal lessons or during transitional time, teachers usually have students loudly recite poetry or other literature. A Chinese teacher gave the following example of how rhythm is integrated into a lesson on the summer solstice:

When summer is coming, the days are getting longer. Summer solstice day is the longest day. After summer solstice, the days are getting shorter. Winter solstice is the shortest day. Because summer days are very hot and humid, we cook “cool noodles” with the children. Meanwhile, we teach the children the Chinese idiom “Eating summer solstice noodles, noodles will be getting less and less and days also become shorter and shorter” During the learning process, the English teachers explain the summer solstice entirely in English, but we still provide opportunities for the children to use their own language honorably “chi-le-xia-zhi-mian, yi-tian-duan-yi-xian”.

The school insists Chinese poetry and rhythm should be integrated into the bilingual program because teachers can precisely present Chinese values and wisdom which can refine the children’s attitude, manner, and intelligence. Again, a mixture of English and Chinese is used. The English speaking instructor helps children cook cool

noodles and shows the pictures and meaning of summer solstice in English; meanwhile, the Chinese teacher teaches Chinese rhythm to increase the children's knowledge of summer solstice and internalize Chinese vocabulary and phrases. The use of a variety of visual hands-on activities representing Chinese poetry and rhythm helps relate the interests of the children to their Chinese literary tradition.

Competency Development

Oral Language

The bilingual program stresses oral language development in Chinese and English. Although students are exposed to an English instructional environment, once students begin to express themselves orally, they are provided encouragement and opportunity to communicate in a wide variety of ways including English, Chinese, or body language. Within the communicative classroom environment, however, "learners may need to be able to express some messages before they have had a chance to fully assimilate the language to the point at which oral language is ready to emerge" (Curtain, 1994, p.117). Since their English is not yet fluent, students naturally speak Chinese instead of English in the classroom for the purpose of communication. Overall, the amount of time available for instruction does not reflect oral language ability; however, the amount of time devoted to speaking influences oral language competence. At the beginning stage, the students in the bilingual program have better Chinese oral language than English.

The Chinese Language Is Used for Communication

Linguistic proficiency is an important tool for acquiring knowledge in the classroom. If students are not proficient in the target language of the classroom, they may not efficiently learn the academic skills and contents (Curtain, 1994). Therefore, a

major concern at the school is: “How can the curriculum help young students in the bilingual program overcome language barriers and learn knowledge?” It is an important issue for students in the bilingual program because the language barrier can create a communication problem and cause misunderstanding in the classroom.

The School’s curriculum provides many language experiences with English speaking teachers in daily activities, such as explanation of theme activities, show and tell, circle time...etc. These activities provide compelling reasons for using English for the delivery of information and accumulating knowledge. In general, English is used dominantly in all academic instruction in the bilingual program. To ensure learning development, the Chinese language is used as a tool for acquiring knowledge but not for teaching a subject. Even though English is the target language in the bilingual classroom, the Chinese language acts as a liaison to help students learn lessons.

Thus, to facilitate students’ learning knowledge, English and Chinese both are used and switched. The students can ask for the English to be translated or ask a teacher to repeat what was said; these practices give the students more confidence so they can continue their learning.

Chinese is employed for special events and extra curricula, Chinese rhythms, classic poems, characters, stories, phrases, and songs that are taught. The School does not seem to consider Chinese as a subject. In other words, Chinese learning is integrated into all themed activities and the special/extra curricula, which focus on Chinese listening comprehension and speaking communication. For example when I was observing, the drama teacher (extra curricula) was teaching the theme of “Spring” and asked the children to jump like a rabbit, run like a horse, walk like a cat, and hop

like a frog. She helped the students learn about the intended outcomes and also provided Chinese vocabulary instruction. The vocabulary focus was on similes and metaphors and helped the students better understand the lesson.

In the bilingual program, Chinese writing and reading are taught in the last year of kindergarten. The purpose of this teaching is to help the students in the bilingual program when they transfer to regular public elementary school. In the last year of the bilingual program, students learn, Chinese Pinyin. Maria, a Chinese teacher, said:

Parents are worried about Pinyin. They are concerned because studying in a regular public elementary school is very competitive. They believe that without learning Chinese Pinyin, the students from the bilingual program will get lost and will have a hard time adjusting when the context is only in Chinese. (07. 16.10)

Overall, in the bilingual program, Chinese language development is emphasized as tool for assisting in curriculum implementation and is a major language in the extra curricula classes. Chinese language usage can be improved in the extra curricula classes with the Chinese subject-teachers, like Chinese Pinyin; however, most children use the Chinese language when they are seeking help and collecting information during classroom activities. In other words, the objectives of the Chinese language learning focus on communicative competence.

Science

The school adopts Western scientific methods to observe natural phenomena from the perspectives of the Chinese 24 solar terms curriculum. Teaching methods stress the importance of process over product and focus on phenomena observation such as weather, four seasons, sun, moon, stars, the earth, rivers, lakes, oceans, mountains,

wind, and rain, and this is also true during student participation in activities like observing flying kites, making a traditional Chinese shuttlecock, or dyeing clothing.

Curriculum design bonds with age appropriate scientific knowledge with smelling, tasting, seeing, hearing, and touching. For example, September's theme ---"Fall" has two solar terms, White Dew and Autumnal Equinox, and its learning objectives focus upon the concepts of autumn and the Chinese Moon Festival; instruction focuses on content such as weather changes, wind, moon, farming and autumnal equinox. For the 3-4 year old students, learning involves observing and discovering; for the 4-5 year old students, curiosity is tapped and they learn through their five senses and make some comparisons; and, the 5-6 year old students learn to understand natural phenomena.

In planning the lessons, teachers follow the objectives of the 24 solar terms curriculum and determine the proper activities for the students. The teachers strive to determine the sequential order of the contents of learning of bilingual education. Frequently, the teachers have the students create webs in order to gain understanding. For example, for the theme Dragon Boat Festival, a web was designed by the 5-6 year old students; the web involves all content areas: literacy, social studies, science, math, music, health, and geography. Although all elements cannot be covered in the web, information gathered in this way forms the basis for further planning. Each of the circlets on the diagram involves one activity. For instance, for Rice Dumplings, students study science and math through making rice dumplings; this activity delves into learning the shapes of leaves, the function of leaves, weight, and the process of steam. The Dragon Boat activity involves an experiment to help students understand the science of sinking

and floating and how the Chinese use fragrance to keep away from bad insects. The activity could be tied to science, Chinese health and physical education.

Overall, the curriculum of the Chinese 24 solar terms focuses on the Chinese life cycle and the Chinese attitude toward natural phenomena. Observation and experiment of natural phenomena are stressed in the learning process; Chinese language is used so as to help students acquire knowledge.

Using the Chinese Language to Develop Mathematic Skills

Mathematics is a very important subject for Chinese parents. They believe that if children have a good base in both math and language, they will be academically prepared to pursue more advanced education in the future. Thus, numerous memorizing strategies frequently are applied in traditional Chinese mathematics learning. The School believes that some mathematic concepts are best learned through the use of Chinese rhythm and oral language. Therefore, the School encourages the teachers to ask the students to say numbers in Chinese and English simultaneously so as to help the children better grasp a concept. Meanwhile, the Chinese teachers use traditional methods in having the children recite the *Three Character Classic*: “One to Ten, Ten to Hundred, Hundred to Thousand, Thousand to Ten Thousand.” in which children in bilingual program learn math in a Chinese manner.

Music, Art and Drama

In addition to the core curriculum of the 24 solar terms, the school provides extra curricula for students, which include fine arts, creative movement, drama, music, and PE (physical education). This extra curriculum is taught in Chinese and places an emphasis on skills learning and cultural understanding. The fine arts focus on visual experiences including Western color water painting, Chinese black ink water painting,

brush painting, crayon/colored pencil drawing, clay sculptures, and varying texture crafts. The content of the subject combines Chinese and Western cultural elements. The music curriculum focuses on body movement, clapping hands, cheering, and singing songs for self-expression and other activities strongly tied to cultural heritage such as Chinese rhyme and Mother Goose rhymes or Christmas carols. The movement and drama curriculums include gross motor, fine motor, body awareness, spatial awareness, and balance activities. Drama is deemed a meaningful and joyful activity because it is designed for students to develop an understanding about themselves, other people, and other cultures.

These subjects are taught in Chinese by professional Chinese teachers who majored in these subjects. Professional subject teachers also follow the school's themes and objectives when designing lessons and coaching specific professional skills. Each subject has importance and learning purposes. This helps students acquire knowledge in all subjects. The bilingual students can focus on the subject, just like the monolingual students in a regular Chinese program. In other words, students in the bilingual program not only learn the skills involved in the subjects, but also the Chinese language is used to acquire knowledge of the subjects.

The School also integrates all subjects into the themes; one example of this is art-integration. For example, in the case of the Chinese Lion Dancing on Chinese New Year, the fine arts teachers teach the students how to create the craft masks and costumes of the lion/dragon; the creative movement teachers teach how to act like a lion/dragon; the drama teachers teach how to express the body language and oral

expression of lions; and music teachers teach some Chinese New Year songs in Chinese.

Cultural Events

Cultural events are important learning activities; examples include the Lantern Festival, the Easter play, song/poem performances, the Rice Dumpling Festival, multi-purpose evaluation, the Graduation Ceremony, shadow play, the Moon Festival, Halloween, Thanksgiving, the Art Fair, and Winter Solstice/Christmas and all of these are based on the School's educational philosophy and mission. The cultural events are planned by the School's academic administrators. Subject-lessons, such as music, movement, and fine arts usually fit into a lecture style, but in cultural events, the students are engaged in active participation. An academic Chinese administrator, Irene said:

One of my responsibilities is to design and conduct cultural events with the students and teachers. We have a curriculum meeting twice a month to review the School's curriculum. Usually, cultural events are scheduled before a new school year starts. Most of the activities take place in "si-he-yuan (四合院)", the open courtyard, such as the Chinese New Year's reunion lunch and Lion Dancing, the Lantern Festival, the Easter drama play, song/poem performances, the Rice Dumpling Festival, multi-purpose evaluation, the Shadow Play, the Moon Festival, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the Winter Solstice/Christmas event. Only few activities like Sport's Day, the Graduation Ceremony and the Art Fair take place outside of the school; conversely, a few activities such as the Breakfast Conference and Open House occur in the classroom. Even though all activities are designed by us (school academic administrators), the activities leave open many possibilities for the students and teachers to expand learning beyond the classroom (06.19.10).

Cultural events are very powerful tools for language learning and social/cultural knowledge development. The school requests English and Chinese instructors to participate in two drama shows a year. The curriculum administrator, Sara said:

The school believes that language expression in plays can expand vocabulary and phrases and help children improve expression and emotion. We spend almost one semester preparing for each drama performance. Children really enjoy drama even though they may not understand all the English or Chinese words in the plays. They are totally involved in the play (17.06.10).

Cultural events are a part of the planned curriculum (Marsh and Willis, 1995).

Focus on cultural events helps students in the bilingual program develop a much wider context, a context involving languages, knowledge skills and the attitudes needed to appreciate culture.

The Bilingual Environment

Environmental learning also is included in the curriculum of the School. To develop a bilingual/bi-cultural program, the school tries to create a balanced Chinese and English learning environment in order to provide many learning opportunities for children and teachers. Tanner (1980) said a school's environment provides a range of activities and exercises for the students to find meaning in their learning, learning not only subject matter but also social roles, attitudes, and values (Tanner & Tanner, 1980). The Natural Way School's building has traditional Chinese architecture which consists of an empty space surrounded by classrooms connected with one another. It is called "si-he-yuan" (四合院). The building of si-he-yuan is different from the general Western preschool and kindergarten. The open courtyard of si-he-yuan is the heart of the School and the front of the open courtyard has a square stage; therefore, all of the people in the classrooms can directly look up and be aware what is happening in the open courtyard. This style is very close to Chinese collective life style. Children can use the open courtyards as a common place for many types of activities, such as hide and seek, jump rope, morning exercises, singing, dancing, eating, cooking, racing, read aloud

performances, etc. In the open courtyard, you can hear Chinese and English in all kinds of activities. Kate, a bilingual teacher, said:

We sing English songs or Chinese poems during the transition period. . . . The open courtyard is students' favorite place. They can play games, run, sing, talk, and watch. Thanksgiving, Christmas, Halloween, and Chinese New Year's activities usually take place in the open courtyard. All the people get together in the courtyard to celebrate ceremonial events. (06.11.2010)

The environment of the Natural Way School is designed in accordance with Chinese tradition. The building of "si-he-yuan" creates a lush traditional Chinese atmosphere, one in which all the children and teachers work together like a big family. Children are free to use Chinese or English to communicate. The environment supports the instruction of both the Chinese and English teachers. This environment accords a great deal of attention to traditional Chinese culture.

In the classrooms, there are seven centers: reading corner, art corner, learning center, science corner, cooking corner, house corner, and block corner. Decoration of the classroom is according to the curriculum theme and is primarily the students' artwork. Calendar, dates of children's birthdays, alphabets, and phonics posters frequently are posted on the wall. All through my observation, I saw a print-rich bilingual classroom environment in which Chinese and English labels were on all materials and furniture. The dual labels were used even during activities, in the class schedule, in the lyrics of songs, in poetry, and in the children's art and work (drawings and paintings with their own dictation in English and with the Chinese teachers' translation) printed in English and Chinese. These are frequently posted at the children's eye level.

I find that the school believes that if environmental print and symbols are connected to spoken language and the children's experience, the children have greater opportunity to make meaning and learning has immediate relevance. Thus, authentic materials of environment are stressed and manipulated for bilingual learning.

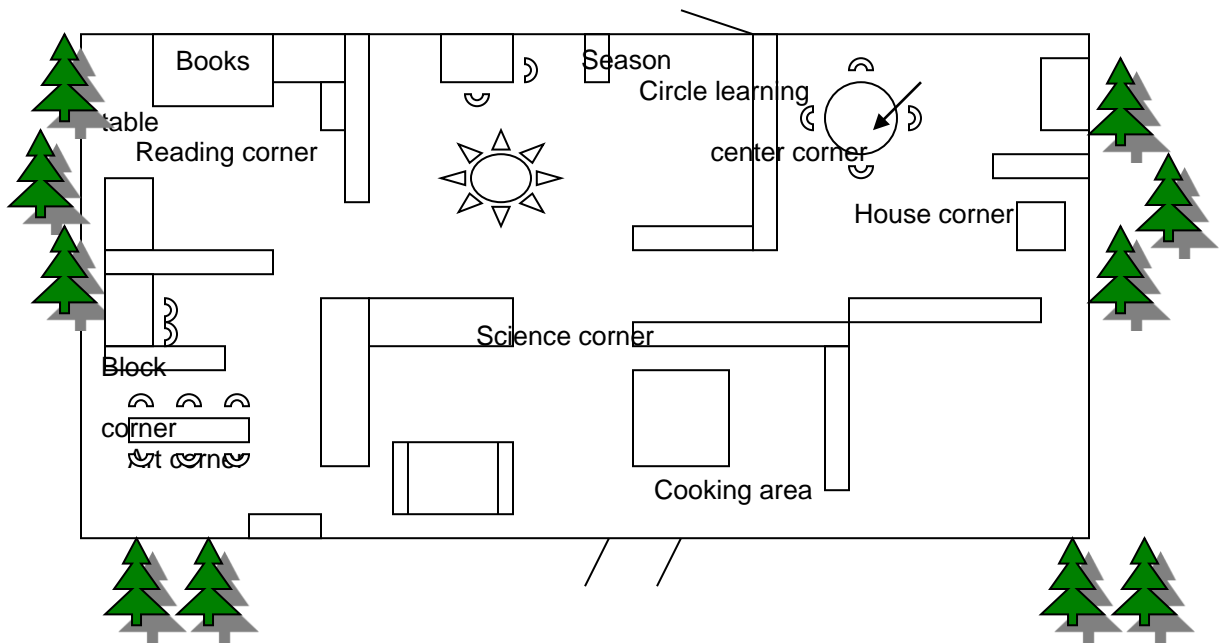


Figure 5-1. Classroom

Teaching Practice

The teaching practices incorporated in bilingual education illustrate the methods used to conduct the bilingual curriculum. I will focus on three parts: 1) how do the Chinese and English speaking instructors maintain the Chinese culture and language within the context of teaching English? 2) How is professional development for both Chinese and English speaking instructors achieved in regard to the Chinese literary tradition? 3) How do the Chinese and English speaking instructors work together to help the students develop their language and subject knowledge.

Maintaining the Chinese Culture and Ideas within the English Teaching Context

While learning English, the children also are expected to develop their Chinese language and cultural identity within the bilingual program. Chinese teachers believe the school's philosophy is the guide, so they facilitate the children's learning according to school's philosophy. The Chinese teachers serve as models in terms of incorporating concepts and language development; this is accomplished through their daily instruction, their cultural experience knowledge, and in their verbal interaction with children. One Chinese teacher, Shelly, said:

I really care about polite bows, so because I am Chinese and follow our school's philosophy, I require all my children to take a bow to show their appreciation before/after we finish lessons. I know some bilingual-program's English speaking instructors do not care about this, but I insist these bilingual kids follow my rules and take the appropriate actions.

The teachers believe if the students respect teachers through their actions, they can discipline themselves well. Otherwise, some Chinese teachers believe the students will not listen to them. This is an example of the cultural knowledge a Chinese teacher imparts: how to respect teachers through daily activities and lessons.

Using the School's Ideas Which Are Related to Western Ideas

The english speaking instructors focus more on teaching skills than on cultural knowledge. However, the educational philosophy and ideas of the Natural Way School are close to their beliefs. Mr. Dan pointed out he totally agrees with the school's philosophy and said:

for learning you need to get the kids emotionally involved and when you connect something to their culture, you get that involvement. You get them emotionally involved. They feel it, so you're talking about the culture and then the language kind of fills in and it helps them... they want to...you get them motivated to learn; the emotional involvement can smooth the way they integrate new information into their brain. Sometimes, if you tell kids 25

vocabulary words, they go in one ear and out the other, but when you attach a word to their culture and make it meaningful and give them a classroom experience . . . they learn. (06.07.10)

Mr. Dan stressed using emotion to help students better relate to learning, making the learning more meaningful. Also he thinks learning at the Natural Way School is based on cultural experiences which relate to personal experiences and emotions. He understands that language and culture are already being successfully integrated into the curriculum; luckily, he thinks that some philosophy and ideas of the school initially are from Western educational philosophy, and it is helpful for him to understand education philosophy of the school.

Learning about Chinese Culture for Effective Instruction

Natural Way School's curriculum encompasses Chinese cultural concepts and includes various cultural events and activities; in other words, if English speaking instructors or Chinese teachers do not understand the Chinese culture, the School's curriculum cannot be effectively conducted. The School's curriculum is based on the Chinese 24 solar terms which are based on how the Chinese people think, live, work, eat, dress, move, and get along with nature. However, to an English speaking instructor, there are some conflicts and cultural differences. English speaking instructors are usually not familiar with the 24 solar terms; they are not familiar with why the 24 solar terms are so meaningful for Chinese, and they need to assistance to be familiar with the connections between the solar terms and the School's curriculum. Thus, they have to rely on the Chinese teachers and the School's resource system to support their lessons and activities.

English speaking instructors honestly stated that at the very beginning, they totally and hugely depended on the Chinese teachers' support. They had meetings with the Chinese teachers after school to discuss the next day's lessons. They followed the Chinese teachers' lesson plans and directions to achieve the curriculum goals. Interestingly, although the Chinese culture takes time to learn in order to be familiar, learning by doing helps the English-speaking teachers better understand Chinese culture. Furthermore, the School provides a cultural atmosphere and environment. A Canadian English teacher revealed he found the School's classroom decorations and meals different from those at other schools where he had taught. Each class has seasonal tables for display of local plants, insects, animals, leaves, flowers, and fruit, this display assisted his understanding of how the children learn and how the Taiwanese live with those natural animals and plants. The School's traditional style meals of rice, beans, and vegetables are another concrete example for the English-speaking instructors of how to teach Chinese culture. The Canadian English teacher said:

Eat the school's meal, wear the school's Chinese style uniform, and listen to the school's Chinese classical music. . . . The school has a very strong Chinese atmosphere. The School's environment helps me understand and experience Chinese culture (06.17.10)

English speaking instructors have their own cultural background and experiences which helps them be aware and make connections with Chinese culture. Moreover, whole environment is really supportive for English speaking instructors to learn about Chinese culture. For successful instruction, they must immerse themselves into the School's daily life in order to learn about the Chinese culture.

Cultural Lessons in the Daily Schedule

Although the 24 solar terms are important ideas that assist in the acquisition of Chinese cultural concepts, the curriculum of the 24 solar terms is very abstract. The themes and objectives provided by the school help the teachers focus on designing appropriate activities. Thus, the 24 solar terms have to be digested and then designed into activities for the bilingual students; well-designed activities can encourage students to focus their attention on new learning rather than the surface features of English. Although teachers primarily are interested in culture and language development, they are also keenly aware of activity designs that facilitate the transition of information into knowledge and language learning.

Every day a routine schedule is followed by the teachers and students. Preparation is done before children come in. Both the Chinese and English teachers come to the classroom around 7:30. Usually, the teachers let the students engage in free play in the classroom's corners before breakfast. During this period, the students speak Chinese to each other; sometimes, they talk to the English teacher about their personal needs, such as going to the bathroom, having some water, etc. This time is followed by using their English for greeting and storytelling in the morning circle. After circle time, classroom teachers conduct activities based on the month's theme, which include: an introduction, storytelling, reading, writing, drawing, cooking, or hands-on activities. During this early period, the English teacher is in charge of all instructional activities, and Chinese teachers assist the English teacher. Outdoor activities or field trips let the students out of classroom to run, walk, jump, and dance. Students are used to speaking a mix of Chinese and English languages during this time.

After nap time, Monday through Friday the students go to their “extra curriculum” which includes drama, music, fine arts, motor skills, and PE. All subject teachers are professionals; they majored in drama, music, art, dance, or PE. The subject teachers focus on their professional subject teaching; for example, the music teacher teaches rhythm systematically with songs and body movement, which focuses on the children’s cognitive development in knowledge of music. They follow their own syllabi which are based on the Chinese 24 solar terms.

‘ESL Time’ focuses on English learning and includes the alphabet, phonics, vocabulary, and sentence patterns. The English speaking instructors follow the School’s language objectives. During this period the English speaking instructors concentrate on language instruction.

English and Chinese teachers are with students all day long until 5:00 o’clock. When the English speaking instructors leave the classroom, the Chinese teachers take the students to a room where their parents pick them up.

Daily Schedule of the Bilingual Program

- 7:30-8:30 Arrival: Free time - The children can do any activity of their own choice: reading books, drawing, playing with puzzles/toys, or preparing breakfast (mainly in Chinese).
- 9:00-9:10 Morning Circle: The teacher brings the class together for songs and stories, and to discuss the day’s activities, plan work time, and show & tell (mainly in English)
- 9:15-10:45 Work Time: The students and teachers work on the topic-activity; students are divided into small groups (language mixed)
- 10:45-11:00 Clean Up (language mixed)
- 11:00-11:30 Outdoor Activity (language mixed)
- 11:30-12:00 Prepare for Lunch (mainly in English)

- 12:00-2:30 Take a Nap
- 2:30-3:30 Extra-Curricula: Drama/Music/Fine Arts/Motor Skills/PE (mainly in Chinese)
- 3:30-3:50 Snack Time (language mixed)
- 3:50-4:20 ESL Time (mainly in English)
- 4:20-5:00 Go Home

Every morning the Chinese teachers have to check the “Communication Books,” these are a dialogue written by Chinese parents and Chinese teachers to communicate about the students’ behavior and announce the School’s important events. During Free Time, the Chinese teachers translate the important messages from Chinese into English for the English speaking instructors. Free Time also is used by the Chinese and English teachers to discuss and communicate about students and make daily plans. The morning circle is the time for ‘show & tell’, daily stories, and songs. Sometimes, the Chinese teachers use this time to have the children practice Chinese poems and rhythms, and talk in Chinese about classroom discipline. Lunch and Snack Times are also good moments to conduct lessons on Chinese table manners and discipline. The students are asked to say appreciative words and eat quietly, which is based on the Confucian idea of “eating with no words”. Nap Time is for everybody to take a rest and the Chinese teachers sometimes play a Chinese or English lullaby.

Professional Development on the Chinese Literary Tradition

Teacher Training on the Chinese Literary Tradition

Also, I found the School provides teacher- training which relates to the School's beliefs and philosophy. Teacher-training is given once a month, and may include lectures such as Wong Zhen Hua speaking on educational methods and Confucian perspectives. Mr. Zang, the founder of the School, requires all Chinese teachers to attend the lectures without any excuse. They study chapters from *The Analects*, *The Great Learning*, *Doctrine of the Mean*, *Class of Poetry*, *Classic of Rites*, and *Class of Changes*. Although some Chinese teachers complained about the training; they admitted they did not exactly understand the profound concepts of Confucius' philosophy. This training facilitates the Chinese teachers as they weave Chinese literary tradition into the bilingual learning process. For example, *I Chingz* (later than 223 BC), one of the oldest Chinese classic texts states this philosophy of education: "Children should come to teachers for their questions rather than the teachers solving the problems for children." This idea encourages teachers to allow students to ask questions and, while teachers should know about their students, they should not solve problems for them.

Furthermore, the School provides some teacher training in traditional cultural practices, such as the Tea Ceremony (Cha-Dao), traditional Chinese dyeing, zither/bamboo flute, and Chinese swordplay etc; this training helps teachers get an understanding on how to integrate activities that are compatible with the School's philosophy.

On the other side, English speaking instructors are required to participate in the 'Teachers' Conference' in which the senior English instructor of the school shares

his/her understanding of the School's educational philosophy to increase English speaking instructors' experience and knowledge of Chinese culture and Chinese educational philosophy.

Promotion of the Chinese Culture for the English Speaking Instructors

The English speaking instructors lack Chinese cultural knowledge and experience; therefore, the curriculum of twenty-four solar terms may seem to be abstract and meaningless. In the bilingual program, the Chinese teachers provide first hand resources and various materials for the English speaking teachers to promote more effective teaching. The Chinese teachers collect information and do explanations for the English teachers. Sometimes, the English speaking instructors do not fully comprehend the meaning of Chinese traditional cultural and literary traditions. Therefore, in the 'Teachers' Conference', the school provides numerous resources in English and the senior English instructors explain the meaning again. The Chinese teachers sometimes model the instruction or even take over the lessons and conduct the activities with English teachers' assistance. A Chinese teacher said:

About the Drag Boat Festival, the Chinese respect the poet (Qu-Yuan 340 BCE-278 BCE) for his royalty and righteousness. However, it is hard to explain to my partner, an English teacher, why the Chinese respect and appreciate a poet from two thousand years ago; a poet who jumped into the river (suicide). In remembering him the Chinese have the Boat Race and eat rice-dumplings to honor him. I tried my best to explain why and how. But I am not sure if he understood it or not. (06.18.10)

This is a typical example of the different perspectives from Chinese and Western values. When the English speaking instructors tell the story about the poet (Qu-Yuan) who committed suicide, they usually change some of the plot of the original story. In the case of the poet, the English teachers thought it was not appropriate to tell young

students about a suicide; meanwhile, they could not understand why the Chinese think Qu-Yuan is very important and worth remembering. For instance, Mr. Dan modified the story of Qu-Yuan saying that he was very sad so he was careless and fell into the river. Mostly, the School approves if English speaking instructors revise the story to meet their values, but not so much so that the story is contradictory to the goals of the School. Chinese culture is imbedded in the curriculum, infusing instruction at every point along the way. The English teachers choose the part they find compatible with their values. When the English speaking instructors acquire a deeper understanding of Chinese culture through the meaningful experiences surrounding them, they also acquire cultural awareness and the ability to function in a new cultural setting. Thus due to the cultural circumstances, English speaking instructors gradually gain knowledge of Chinese cultural traditions and begin to understand how they are interpreted from the perspective of native Chinese.

Learning about the Two Education Systems

The data shows that the bilingual program of the School is based upon two major educational goals. The school provides an English education which is based on knowledge of second language acquisition. On the other hand, Chinese education includes not only language learning, but also Chinese cultural and literary tradition.

Sometimes beliefs about Chinese education may conflict with those concerning English education. One Chinese teacher pointed out that the English speaking instructors usually provided mentally and physically exciting activities to engage children in learning, but Chinese teachers sometimes think differently about learning. The Chinese teacher, Carry, quoted from the book *The Great Learning* by Confucius' pupil, "...a calm with unperturbed state may be attained. That calmness will succeed a tranquil

repose. In that repose there may be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired end.” Chinese teachers believe it’s important to learn calmness and tranquility first; only then can students really learn something. They strongly value this idea and apply it in the bilingual program. Therefore, the Chinese teachers are always reminding the English speaking instructors not to provide activities that overexcite the students too much because they would cause the students to be unfocused.

On the other hand, some English speaking instructors have opposite ideas. They believe that teachers should help students feel excited about learning in order to become active learners. They also believe that physical activity is age appropriate for very young children and the simple addition of a competitive factor or an element of mystery or wonder can transform a meaningless but necessary practice into an interesting activity. Two different teaching methods about learning exist among the Chinese teachers and the English speaking instructors in the School.

To avoid conflicts between the teachers both the Chinese and English speaking instructors need to learn about each other’s values and respect teaching and learning. Overall, the differences can provide a balanced approach to education. Thus, the Chinese and English speaking instructors are encouraged to be open-minded about different approaches and bridge those differences so as to benefit the students.

Bilingual Program Assessment

Assessment allows us to see the results of the bilingual program. Usually, bilingual programs measure student performance with standardized tests (Curtain, 1984). However, the educational policy of the school doesn’t believe language skills are best

measured with standardized tests. Rather, their bilingual educational assessment stresses student self-concept and attitudes.

The school also uses assessment to help the students attain goals. Assessment of student performance within the communication-oriented purpose is used for to provide the students the opportunity to develop cultural sensitivity and use languages in a communicative way. These alternative assessments are different from traditional evaluations, such as paper-pencil tests, but they are used in an effort to match the goals of the School. From homework, multi-purpose assessment, portfolios, and teacher and parent conferences to the philosophy of the school and the curriculum of the 24 Solar terms, the school emphasizes communicative and cultural assessments within a growth process to help accommodate Chinese/English language and cultural identity learning. The relationship of assessment and culture /language development is similar to the figure (5-2).



Figure 5-2. Alternative Assessment

As the biggest gear turns around, two smaller gears also turn. The figure (6-2) presents assessments for assisting Chinese cultural and language development within

the School's educational context. Thus, the purpose of assessment focuses on attitude toward culture-oriented communication. In other words, the performance evaluation of the students is based on their enthusiasm and motivation while participating in cultural activities and on the student's efforts in communicating in the Chinese and English languages.

Teachers monitor, assess, and evaluate student learning progress via project activities, classroom participation, interacting with peers, homework practice, multi-purpose evaluation, and performance on written work. From these varied activities there are several ways to gather authentic, rich sources and meaningful information about student performance.

Alternative Assessment for Assisting Language and Subject Learning

Tyler (1949) stressed that evaluation should involve getting evidence about changes in student behavior, stressing that teachers were not limited purely to giving paper-and-pencil tests (Tanner & Tanner, 1980). By using varied means of assessment teachers can systematically document their entire class and individual progress and the result provides richer data than the scores on a worksheet or standardized test. The Natural Way School's assessment is based on this idea. Young students come to school with different learning abilities and background knowledge, so they begin at different places. Additionally, students learn at different rates; thus, it is vital that the School's assessment monitors the students' development from time to time. This evaluation process informs teachers what and whether the students are learning and often suggest changes that will result in more effective teaching. The evaluations include the students' language development and general learning progress.

English Homework as a Learning Resource from a Chinese Perspective

The curriculum design of the School is based on Western ideas and philosophy but emphasizes the Chinese idea of homework for students. The Chinese parents believe homework can extend students' learning. However, the weekly homework of the school is for students to apply what they have been taught in the classroom, and for teachers to know what the students have learned. Homework is varied, including listening to songs and stories and games. Here is a scanned example:

<i>The Things I Am Learning</i>			
Class: Dragonfly		Date: 3/29	Teachers: Pierre & Birdie
Items 項目	Contents 課程內容		
Topic 主題教學	Here is Spring 春來了	Work Sheets Attached:	pcs
Hands-on Activities 動手操作活動	1. Circle bunny 小圓兔 2. Paper bag bunnies. 紙兔 3. Make bunny ears 小兔子的耳朵 4. Easter basket 籃子 5. Coloring Easter eggs 彩蛋		
Songs 歌曲	Skida-ma-rink		
Poems 童謠	Teddy Bear 泰迪熊		
Story 故事	Easter Story 復活節的故事		
ESL	Phonics 自然教學	A~Z Song	
	Sentence Patterns 句型	1. Grass begins to grow in the spring. 2. Leaves begin to grow on the trees. 3. Farmers and gardeners plant seeds in the spring. 4. Bears and other sleeping animals wake up. 5. Birds sing and build nests in the spring. 6. People are ready for spring. 7. They are happy that winter is over.	
	Vocabulary 單字	Flowers, eggs, rabbits, bunny, baskets, color eggs, birds, Bugs, farmer, bears, nest, candy, red, blue, orange, yellow Brown, black, pink, purple, white, green.	
	Daily Conversation 生活常用對話	1. Wait a moment. 等一下 2. Hurry up 快點 3. Put it back 放回去	
Field Trip 戶外教學	Eggs Hunting 找蛋		

Figure 5-3. Learning Sheet

Homework is assigned not as an evaluation of the students, but to provide a review of learning and act as a resource for students. Carol, a Chinese teacher, said:

It is no pressure. Weekly homework includes a CD and work sheets. The students listen to the CD and follow the directions while doing homework. Also students listen to the songs and stories as many as they want. It's kind of a learning resource for students. This helps Chinese parents feel more secure because they become more aware of what the teachers teach in the School (05.17.09)

A parent from bilingual program, Tina, said:

I insist the school gives homework; it helps me know what they are learning in the School and if my child is learning or not. Most importantly, homework is practice. English is a foreign language. I want my child to continue practicing when he is home. My English is poor; therefore, the CD is really helpful. I can play and repeat it many times until my child is familiar with stories and songs. I am very happy when my child learns. He understands English and can communicate with English teachers (06.11.10).

Homework is valued in Chinese society. However, the purpose of homework of the school is not to give students extra-work. Such homework provides information to parents about the curriculum of the school. The homework is especially important since the school has no textbooks and parents want to monitor whether their children are learning or not. Homework also becomes a tool for parents to expand children's English learning.

Multi-Purpose Assessment (Both in Chinese and English)

Since English learning in Taiwan is foreign language learning, there are not a lot of chances to speak English when the students are out of the School. Multi-purpose assessments reinforce students using English in English contexts. I found the teachers using checklists and rating scales to record student achievement. An example of a checklist is the "I can help!" and includes the following: 1) Can recognize color? 2) Can understand the names of clothes? 3) Can follow directions? 4) Can finish work

individually? Teachers complete the checklist while the students are involved in an activity. Checklists permit the teachers to quickly evaluate students' language competence and abilities in the content areas. Additionally, assessments also provide opportunities for the students to practice speaking English. A Chinese teacher, Carol said:

Through five problem-solving activities, the students apply their English skills to solve problems, providing many opportunities for the students to use English. From the process, I can recognize whether the students are able to use English to acquire knowledge or develop abilities. For example, one of listening comprehension problem solving activities "I Can Help!" is designed by academic administrators. It's about helping mother hang different styles of clothes into a bamboo pole to dry (regular housework in Taiwan). The students listen to the order in English and then choose the clothes in order to help mother. If the students pick the clothes in the correct order and put them on bamboo pole, it means they understand English and can successfully finish this activity (06.23.10).

Games and activities also can be assessments. Formal paper-pencil examinations for children ages 3 to 6 are not stressed. These evaluations assess students' ability in language, hands-on ability, understanding of concepts, and factual knowledge. Multi-purpose assessments indicate student understanding of the roles conventions play and an understanding of these conventions shapes student behavior. They focus on how people commonly act in Chinese society and in crisis situations in Chinese culture. For example, the children in the bilingual program should demonstrate an understanding of 24 solar terms. The students learn that people act the way they do because they are using options the Chinese society allows for satisfying basic physical and cultural needs.

Portfolio Assessment

Portfolios may take the form of a learning journal where the students record their learning process in a narrative description. Mr. Zang said: “children cannot be judged within a number, a grade, or one word such as A or B and good or bad.” He thinks that both Chinese and English educators should provide a full description of a student’s attitude, performance, learning process, reflection, and behavior in the School (school document). Thus, to access this information, student portfolios are preferred instead of testing and grading. Portfolios include students’ work including artwork, their writing in both Chinese and English, photos of students engaged in activities, communication-books in English and Chinese, tape-recordings of oral evaluations in English, and written statements of observations from Chinese teachers for a whole school year.

Students in the bilingual program are evaluated from two perspectives, Chinese and English language proficiency. However, English speaking instructors’ comments can be misinterpreted by the Chinese parents, who are anxious to make their children perfect. For example, English teachers sometimes compliment a student first and then point out the student’s weaknesses. An example is: “Eddie is an excellent student. His homework is always well-done. I am proud of his performance. The only thing he needs is more practice in oral English.” However, the Chinese parents focus on the “more practice in oral English” and worry the son needs to improve his spoken English. They tend to overlook compliments like “excellent, well-done, and proud of.” Conversely, they focus on how they can help the son achieve at a higher level. Some parents complain the English teachers’ comments are too superficial, and don’t provide concrete suggestions for their children improving their English. On the other hand, English teachers think learning in preschool and kindergarten should be fun and interesting, but

Chinese parents push their children too much and are overly concerned with their children's academic achievement.

Chinese parents expect teachers to directly point out their children's weaknesses and English teachers want to focus on the children's strengths. Consequently, the Chinese teachers usually play the role of finding a balance between the English teachers and Chinese parents.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences assist students in the bilingual program when they facilitate self-evaluation and lead to a mutual understanding among students, parents and teachers. Since written communication causes some misunderstanding, face-to-face communication is very important and helps to increase mutual understanding. Chinese teachers not only play a role as facilitators but also as translators at these conferences. Chinese teacher, Carol, said:

The parent-teacher conference is very important for helping parents to understand students' school learning. In the bilingual program, basically, my co-teacher, a foreign teacher, and I go through each student's portfolio and come to an agreement about each student's performance and achievement. At the parent-teacher conference, I have to overcome the language barrier and cultural differences in order to help the Chinese parents understand what the foreign teachers are saying. Although my English is not good enough, most of time I understand my co-teacher. If Chinese parents do not understand English very well, I will translate it. I am a liaison between the Chinese parents and the foreign teachers. In the beginning of semester, the conference is for parents to hear about the teachers' plans, and I also help the English teachers get students' information from parents. At the end of the semester, the conference is to let parents know how well the students performed in school and what the students need to improve in the future (07.11.10).

Teachers explain the philosophy of the school and discuss the curriculum in practical examples to parents; as a result, the parents understand the focus of the

bilingual program and how the teachers handle the curriculum of the 24 solar terms. When parents are fully informed, they are better able to recognize their children's performance and rethink whether their children are fulfilling their learning capacity in the bilingual and bi-cultural program. Teachers also benefit as they realize the parents' expectations and have the opportunity to reflect upon what they need to do to improve their instruction in bilingual and bi-cultural program.

With the absence of textbooks and the 24 Chinese solar terms as the core of the curriculum, integrative and thematic planning depends on a solid understanding of the philosophy of the School and of Chinese culture. As a result, effective planning demands flexible language usage and a strong Chinese and English vocabulary base. The teachers are asked to respond to Chinese culture and take advantage of opportunities that arise in the development of themes since they include instruction in math, science, health, social studies, music, art, language arts, and physical education. Since the School has a clear educational philosophy and curriculum to conduct bilingual education, the assessment of the School, while comprehensive, may take for granted an emphasis on Chinese language and cultural identity.

The Natural Way School develops methods for measuring student achievement within the communication-oriented classroom. These assessments examine not only the learning of the material but also stress giving students the opportunity to use the Chinese and English languages and recognize Chinese culture. Thus, well-designed activities such as multi-purpose assessments that reflect on the outcomes of integrated and thematic lessons are good for the students in bilingual program. Assessments also include records of teacher's observations of individual students in each performance

and the work in the students' portfolios. This procedure serves not only to develop a record of each student's actual performance, but also is a reminder to the teacher of the students about which students need more attention.

Perceptions of the Bilingual Program

As discussed, in bilingual program, English proficiency is developing all the time; students are not concerned about their English ability or competing with monolingual students who learn English in one to two periods a week. For students in the bilingual program, constantly improving English proficiency is taken for granted. To understand the perception of the bilingual program, I interviewed former students, parents, and current teachers in public schools.

Chinese and English Mutually and Orally Support at Beginning Stages

Elementary students like to do code switching more than younger children because they know more Chinese and English. An elementary teacher gave me an example of what one of her children was asked in English: "What is a grasshopper? Tell your mother in Chinese." The child said "草跳" (grass + hopper). Obviously, he translated the meaning word by word. The child learned the 'grasshopper' meaning in English, but he did not know it in Chinese. But he knew 'grass' and 'hopper' meanings in Chinese. Therefore, he used a code switching strategy to translate the English words to Chinese meaning. It's great experience for children in bilingual program to manipulate languages at young age. The English teacher described this example to explain how she responds to the child's response, how she understands the interference between learning the two languages, and how knowledge of language learning gives her power

to support the children's learning and allows them to learn by trial and error. A current public elementary teacher gave another example:

Students from the bilingual program are so creative. I remember once I taught math about problem solving, the statement saying “跑百米 (one hundred meters race)” in Chinese characters, one student from the bilingual program of the school, asked me what does mean “跑百米(one hundred meters race)”? And he asked whether one hundred pieces of rice have a race. I could not help but laugh. I thought he really had good imagination but his Chinese vocabulary was not good enough. However, after an explanation, he understood and solved the problem very fast. From my viewpoint, he was a good learner and very creative (6. 14.10).

The students from the bilingual program might have some flaws when it comes to Chinese proficiency, such as vocabulary, phrases, and terms in academic Chinese language which they have not learned from daily conversation in communication-oriented bilingual classrooms. However, on the other hand, the math teacher did not think it was an important point about how the child was thinking about language; he was considering word order and that affected the meaning. Interesting, the child had very strong sensitivity of languages, which will help him fully express himself in the future and manipulate languages and words in creative writing when he has time to build up two languages maturely.

Knowledge of Chinese Language, Pinyin, Needs to Be Taught in the Bilingual Program

The students in the bilingual program move to the public monolingual schools. Usually they need time to get familiar with many things such as classroom environment, discipline, curriculum, new teachers, and new friends. Chinese language proficiency does not seem to be a worry. One parent from bilingual program, Judy's mother, recalled:

I did not worry about her communication in elementary school. It was not a problem for my child. We speak Chinese at home all the time. But I was concerned about Chinese phonics, Pinyin, because my child did not have a lot of practice in the bilingual program and the public school teachers always suppose students learned it in kindergarten. Actually the School followed the MOE's requirement to teach Pinyin and taught it for six weeks instead of the required three. Nevertheless, I was concerned about it. Anyway, I was happy that my daughter could catch up after one semester (07.10.10).

John's mom said:

John's first test of Pinyin was horrible. I thought he was learning Pinyin in kindergarten, but he did not know how to take examinations in his elementary school. The Natural Way School never taught how to take exams. However, John quickly improved once he was familiar with examinations (7.10. 10).

Although the Chinese teachers in the bilingual program teach the 40 Mandarin phonetic symbols “ㄅ, ㄆ, ㄇ” to children as they prepare to go to elementary school, the School insists Pinyin is taught for fun and does not use any pressure. The school's purpose of teaching the 40 symbols is to prepare the students for studying in elementary and facilitate the children who read Chinese books before learning the Chinese characters. Thus, the Chinese teachers teach the 40 Mandarin phonetic symbols 2-3 times a week; they instruct using pronunciation, recognition, spelling, reading, and writing and through games and activities. However, these instructional methods do not satisfy parents who only care about testing scores. Nevertheless, after many practice opportunities most of the students in the bilingual program learn Pinyin and in elementary school they overcome their fear of Pinyin testing after a couple of weeks.

Chinese Phrases and Poems from the Curriculum of the 24 Solar Terms Help Familiarize the Students with Chinese Recitation of classical Literature Activities of Elementary Schools

In Taiwan, some public elementary schools advocate recitation from Chinese classical literature. They require their students to recite some Chinese classical books, like *The Analects* · *Mencious* · *3 Words Classics (San-Zi-Jing)* · *Three Hundred Tang Dynasty Poems*. . . . Traditionally, familiarity with classical books is very important for Chinese intellectuals. Thus, many public elementary schools encourage the students to recite and memorize portions of classical literature even if the students do not understand the meaning of the books completely. A former student's mom, Kate said:

I remember that my daughter's elementary teacher required her class to recite 心經 (Xin-Jing) because the teacher complained the class was too noisy. She wanted her students recite 心經 (Xin-Jing) for pacification. As I heard it, I thought 心經 (Xin-Jing) is too difficult for them. However, my daughter told me she had learned some Chinese phrases when she was in the bilingual program of the school and this was not first time she had to do recitation. Thus, she memorized it very fast and this kind of practice dramatically influenced her writing. She won second place in the Chinese writing competition of the last semester of elementary school. I think her Chinese writing is pretty good because she memorized a lot of good words in her mind. I was very proud of her (7.10.10).

The above comment indicates that recitation is very common and important to the Chinese. The curriculum at the Natural Way School naturally and meaningfully provided chances to read aloud and this practice lays the groundwork for the Chinese language skills needed to continue learning in elementary school.

Students Learn Chinese Idioms

Chinese language instruction in the bilingual program of the school is a supplemental tool and is not presented in isolation. The Chinese language is used to express meaning important to the students and to the contents being learned. It is a

communication-based approach and differs from Chinese subject learning in elementary school where knowledge of the Chinese language is stressed and practiced. It is true that the curriculum at the Natural Way School may help children become more familiar with Chinese cultural traditions because they are embedded in the themes whereas other students attended a school where language skills were taught in isolation.

Children at the School learn the stories in Chinese 24 solar terms curriculum which can help them to use the idioms in real contexts. Christine, a 13 years old girl, said:

Although memorizing Chinese idioms is annoying, Chinese idioms are so interesting because every idiom has a story about Chinese wisdom and morals. For instance, the idiom ‘飲水思源’(When drinking water, think of its source) tells us about appreciation. I learned this idiom in the story of Tomb Sweeping when I was very young at the Natural Way School, I remember. (06.10.10)

The bilingual curriculum of the school is based on Chinese culture and Chinese literary tradition, which really helps children become familiar with the concepts and meanings found in classic Chinese books and this facilitates the children remembering the idioms and using them naturally.

The Curriculum of the Chinese 24 Solar Terms Relates to Many Aspects of Chinese Culture, which Can Facilitate Chinese Literacy Development in Middle School

Although Chinese language development in the bilingual program focuses on oral language for communication purposes, the curriculum provides numerous Chinese stories about eating, living, dressing, planting, etc...which lend layers of meaning to Chinese literature. Nancy Hansen-Krening (1982) asserts that when the language-experience approach is used the reading material matches the content of the oral language, enabling the student to draw on personal experience; thus the learner’s task is made simpler. Hensen-Krening claims that oral language can provide experience

which promotes students' reading and writing abilities. In other words, although the curriculum of the 24 solar terms involves using the English language to learn about Chinese lifestyle and Chinese values, it still provides students with varied Chinese experiences. Additionally, in language-experience the visual symbols/Chinese characters are connected to oral language. Thus the meaning of the Chinese experiences is readily understood and has immediate relevance. Emma, a former student, 16 years old, stated her opinion about her Chinese learning in middle school:

Chinese study includes Chinese history, historical allusion and stories. I think that a lot of knowledge and wisdom comes from Chinese historical events and stories even when they become idioms we use in everyday life. If I learn about them by rote, I soon will forget them. But if I learn about the Chinese from Chinese stories, I remember. I have enjoyed listening to the stories since I was preschooler. Stories drew my attention and assisted me in remembering the words. Thus, the more Chinese historical events and stories I know, the more Chinese knowledge I learn. Various stories I learned when I was young in the Natural Way School, helped me understand the more classical Chinese reading in middle school. Although I came from the bilingual program, I never thought my Chinese was behind that of other students. (06.15.10)

She strongly expressed her idea about Chinese study, which parallels the theory of the language-experience. Listening to stories through oral language (English) still can develop students' knowledge of Chinese literacy. In other words, the curriculum of the Chinese 24 solar terms emphasizes Chinese culture. Since Chinese language is an integral component of cultural learning, the curriculum provides important concepts and knowledge and facilitates students in their development of Chinese literacy.

The Curriculum of the Chinese 24 Solar Terms Increases Students' Sensitivity To Cultural Learning

Two essential elements in the curriculum of the Chinese 24 solar terms are nature and humanity. Bilingual education of the School not only highlights language learning, but also includes learning about humanity from a Chinese perspective; this learning

includes culture, values, ideas, religion, holidays, and philosophy. Additionally, Western cultures are integrated into it as well. Students become more sensitive to the world around them. A 16 year-old former student, Jasmine, stated how she loved Chinese Valentine Day:

My favorite Chinese festival is (The Seventh of July in the Lunar calendar, Chinese Valentine's Day, because the festival has a romantic love story and the story of cowherd and weaver girl really touches my heart. In this day, there are many folk customs such as preparing sesame oil chicken and worshiping Lady God for the good skills of needlecraft. It is better to say I love the festival rather than I love the romantic stories. However, I do not like the Dragon Boat Festival because I do not like the story of Qu-Yuan who was so stupid (He jumped into the river because his Emperor did not want to listen to him) (06.15.10).

She also talked about her favorite Western festival:

My favorite Western festival is Thanksgiving Day. When I was young, I was very impressed because we had a feast for appreciation. I thought the Chinese do not have this kind of festival for appreciation. We have Tomb Sweeping Day which is preparing sacrifices of food and spirit money to worship our deceased ancestors. However, Thanksgiving Day seems to appreciate everything and everybody. It's different from Tomb Sweeping Day which only shows appreciation to our own ancestors (06.15.10).

Her response impressed me. The culture comparison shows she is aware of the cultural differences between Chinese and Western cultures. Another former student, Christine, also compared Eastern and Western culture. She said:

If you would like me to do a comparison between Eastern culture and Western culture, I can use a metaphor to express the difference. I think Eastern culture is like great mountains with clouds and mist. You cannot see through it clearly but it still is treasured. On the other hand, Western culture is like a vast and limitless ocean. You can see through it but it is too deep to be predictable (06.25.10).

Cultural identity occurs when individuals feel they share common characteristics with groups such as ancestors, territories, institutions, values, norms, and languages

(Sumaryone and Wilma, 2004). The above student responses illustrate they are not confused with cultural identity. They could see the difference between themselves and others (the world), recognize ancestry, and appreciate the varied costumes. In other words, they understand their relationship to the world (West, 1992), and they construct and visualize themselves in the social process (Norton, 1997).

The Students in the Bilingual Program Could Have More Appreciation of Their English Proficiency and Their Own Culture

I asked interviewees the question: Can you see the differences in Chinese and English learning between you and your classmates who did not go to the bilingual program of the School? The following is what they said:

Christina said:

I am glad that my English is excellent. I do not need to put out a big effort and I still have a good grade. Also I have enjoyed a lot of different Western experiences which many Taiwanese children do not have. Chinese subjects do not bother me at all, but they take time to study and memorize for good scores. Although a lot of Chinese recitation is involved, I really appreciate Chinese classic poetry (06.25.10).

John said:

In English, I always receive full points. My listening and vocabulary are much better than other students. In Chinese, I also got full points on the High School Entrance exam. I put in a lot of effort to get a good grade. However, Chinese is much more difficult than English. I spend more time studying Chinese than English. My Chinese scores are above the level of my class. I think my Chinese performance is still better than others who are monolingual because my parents care about my school work scores. I work hard for them (07.11.10).

Jasmine said:

My classmates consider English a difficult subject to learn. They read assigned English novels very slowly. I read them fast. I do not need to check the dictionary very often. Meanwhile, I also like to read Chinese novels, which give me a lot of pleasure. Of course, I do not need to stop to check the dictionary when I read Chinese novels. My English is much better

than other students; therefore, I can devote my efforts to other subjects such as math and science. Chinese for me and my classmates is not easy to get good scores. We have to study hard; then we can get a good grade (06.16.10).

Sara said:

There is no difference between me and classmates, but my English is much better than other students who were not in the bilingual program of the Natural Way School. I think English writing is much easier than Chinese writing, but my classmates believe Chinese and English writing are both difficult (06.10.10).

Emma said:

My some classmates really suffer when trying to learn English. Therefore, to them, Chinese is easy compared with English. Although I think English is much easier than Chinese, my Chinese performance is still above the level of my class because I put a lot of effort to get good scores (17.06.10).

Yen said:

I enjoy watching movies in English. I never depend on the Chinese subtitles, but my classmates have to read Chinese subtitles to understand the plot of the movie. My parents are proud of my English ability because they cannot speak English. My Chinese is okay. It is not so good, not so bad. I study hard, then I get good scores. Oppositely, if I do not study it, then I get bad scores. However, when learning Chinese I enjoy learning Chinese characters which are so creative and beautiful. I enjoy Chinese handwriting. It is much more interesting than the English alphabet. I am learning Chinese calligraphy now (06.07.10).

According to the above responses, I found that all students I interviewed had an outstanding performance in the subject of English in elementary and middle schools. Their proficiency in English gives them a lot of confidence. On the other hand, the Chinese language learning in middle school is difficult and students need to put forth a lot of effort for a good grade. There are not many differences between students from the Natural Way School and those who did not attend. The Chinese language needs to be studied hard; then one will have good scores. The differences are a testing matter, not a concern about language development. However, I found the students from the

bilingual program greatly appreciate Chinese literary traditions; for example: Yen likes Chinese characters and Chinese calligraphy; Jasmine enjoys reading Chinese novels; and Christina loves Chinese classic poems. In addition, I found John studies hard for his parents; he wants to please and honor his parents. His behavior in Taiwan society is deemed 'filial obedience.' John is guided by the value system of Chinese culture and holds positive attitudes toward the culture (Landry & Allard, 1992). His behavior and attitude are typical of a Taiwanese child toward his parents. Overall, the data shows the students from the bilingual program of the School do not have difficulties in school in terms of either cultural identity or Chinese language development.

Chinese Holidays and Festivals in the Curriculum Are Reinforced at Home in Chinese

The curriculum of the Chinese 24 solar terms is about Chinese lifestyle, holidays and festivals and also can be learned at home or outside of the school. In other words, the curriculum is conducted in English at the School, then reinforced in Chinese at home or outside of the school. Universal festivals: New Years, Christmas, and Mother's Day, and Chinese festivals: Chinese New Year, Lantern Festival, Moon Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival are all instructed in English by English speaking instructors and later this instruction may be reviewed at home by parents in Chinese. Although children may not exactly understand what is said in English, they have other opportunities to learn and this learning may come from home in the Chinese language. This varied repetition can assist children in acquiring knowledge. A parent, May, said:

I am not worried about Chinese learning because we speak Chinese home all the time. Also, I like that the School utilizes the Chinese 24 solar terms as its main curriculum. My son learned about the Dragon Boat Festival in English from the School. When he came home, he used some English words to share his school experience about the Dragon Boat Festival; usually I also retold the stories and shared my experience about the

Festival in Chinese. Therefore, there is no interference between Chinese and English learning. In addition, I think using two languages to acquire the same knowledge must strongly and powerfully reinforce the learning (07.02.10).

May had a positive attitude toward the curriculum of the school. She emphasized knowledge and learning and appreciated using two languages to acquire knowledge.

Another parent, Shang, was more concerned about English learning. He said:

We speak Chinese at home. I am not worried about Chinese language development; on the other hand, I am a little worried about her English. My brother's son is in other bilingual school in which he is trained to speak English all the time. In the English learning part, I think that school seems better than the Natural Way School. My daughter does not speak English at home; therefore, compared with my brother's son, my daughter's English seems a little behind him. However, I see my daughter is very happy and she is willing to share things she learns from the school. Of course, we are familiar with those themes and festivals. Thus, we share and discuss them. It is really good for us. I think she is learning. And I do not want to let my daughter to show off (02.07.10).

Obviously, from some parents' viewpoint, they were not worried about Chinese language development and cultural identity. They are concerned about knowledge /skills and English learning. They believe since Chinese is the major language used in Taiwanese society, the students can learn Chinese more easily. English learning only happens in the classroom of the bilingual program. Therefore, they may push their children to speak English with English speaking instructors. Moreover, some of them evaluate a bilingual school based on one student's English ability.

Conclusion

Unlike other bilingual schools which emphasize only English education and ignore Chinese language development and cultural identity, the bilingual program of the Natural Way School seeks a balance of Chinese and English learning to advance the

Chinese language development and cultural identity of Taiwanese students in the bilingual program. The curriculum of the bilingual program of the School is based upon Chinese culture which is based on the Chinese 24 solar terms. The Chinese 24 solar terms are grounded on Chinese culture which includes nature and humanity from a Chinese perspective. Thus, the principles of curriculum design and teaching practices have a foundation of Chinese philosophy, Chinese culture, and Chinese literary tradition.

Also, I interviewed former students, elementary teachers, and former parents to determine the outcomes of the bilingual program. Former students were in bilingual program at least for three years. Currently, they are elementary, middle, or high school students. They strongly expressed their positive attitude toward the bilingual program and stated how they appreciated the chance to be in a program where the children not only acquired English ability, but also their Chinese language development improved and their cultural identity was strengthened. Parents also discussed how they overcame their concerns and how their children kept improving their Chinese language usage and developing their cultural identity through the School's activities.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overview

This study was designed to explore a bilingual/bicultural pre-school/kindergarten program in Taiwan. I investigated the philosophy, curriculum, and teaching practices of a pre-k bilingual program. This study was conducted from a constructivist perspective and provides a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of a bilingual/bicultural Pre-K school program.

Discussion

Taiwan is sensitive about any discussion of its existence in the world. From the colonial period to present, its language and cultural identity has been interrupted and confused time and again. With its highly developed economy, English is crucial if Taiwan is to raise its visibility worldwide facilitating international recognition of its economic growth and political power. Many Taiwanese people want their children to learn English at a young age so they can become proficient in English and compete in the future for high-paying jobs both nationally and internationally.

Yielding to this demand, many early childhood English/Chinese bilingual schools have been established nationwide. However, the bilingual preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan are criticized because they teach English at such a young age. Scholars and educators in Taiwan are concerned that bilingual education in early childhood will cause children to lose their first language competence and cultural identity. Therefore, many schools face obstacles resulting from their English education curriculum during early childhood and have received low evaluations from educators and scholars (Chang, X- J., Chang, J-L. and Lin, Y. Zh., 2002). Some take the stance that it is inappropriate for

young children learning English in isolation and that learning which is unrelated to a meaningful context will damage Taiwanese children's English language. On the other hand, learning English in a meaningful context with Western Values is also deemed inappropriate in that it will damage young children's Chinese language acquisition and cultural identity. Thus, English education in early childhood bilingual programs is a dilemma in Taiwanese society, but the Taiwanese all seem to agree --- English is inevitably important. There is agreement that bilingual education cannot be a "subtractive" bilingual curriculum in which students lose their native language and cultural identity. In other words, bilingual education must develop two languages and cultures simultaneously to satisfy Taiwanese society.

However, in reality, in Taiwan, English development in early childhood bilingual schools is considered the first priority. Although they are called Chinese/English bilingual programs, they focus on English language development; moreover, Chinese usage is generally believed to interfere with English development. English education overwhelms Chinese education and English hegemony results. Figure 7-1 could demonstrate the typical bilingual education in Taiwan.

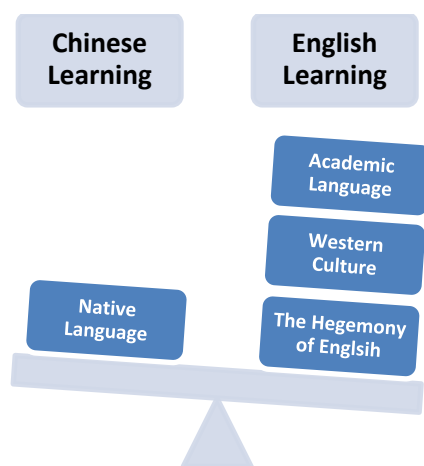


Figure 6-1. Typical Bilingual Education in Taiwan

Children in most bilingual programs learn all subjects in English; teachers speak English; the children read books written in English; they are expected to participate in all activities in English even though they speak their native language outside of school and at home. In an attempt to address Taiwanese concerns, some researchers also believe that there is little benefit and probable damage in learning a second language at a very young age unless parents are careful to maintain both languages and values as equally important (McLaughlin, 1984). The Natural Way School struggled to design a balanced bilingual program in the form of enrichment bilingualism. In other words, the balanced bilingual program at the School is meant to foster additive bilingualism, in that the second language and culture are acquired with little or no pressure to replace or reduce the first language. The Natural Way School acknowledges that the children in the bilingual program live in two worlds where two languages and two cultures come together. As figure 7-2 illustrates, they realize that a balanced bilingual education, in a non-English speaking country like Taiwan, could not simply mean the existence of two equal halves, one Chinese and the other English or a splitting of the bilingual program into two separate parts.

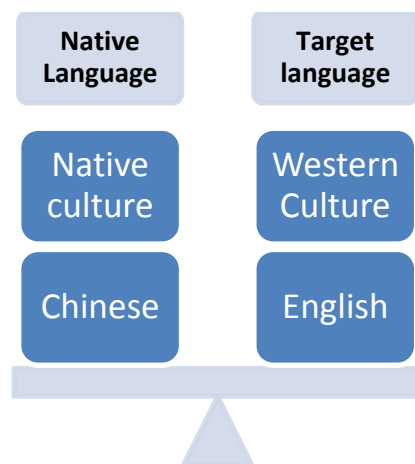


Figure 6-2. Not Balanced Bilingual Education

Therefore, the School chose to employ Chinese culture, Chinese educational philosophy, and Chinese language to balance the English hegemony and set it apart from the ordinary early childhood bilingual curriculum. Figure 7-3 depicts their concept of an additive bilingual curriculum.

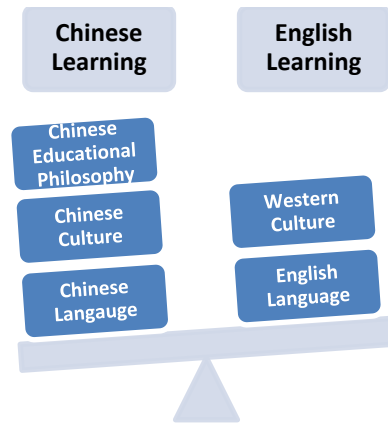


Figure 6-3. Bilingual Education of the Natural Way School

Philip Riley (2007) quotes Edward Burnett Tylor's (1832-1917) words: "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society" (1871, p. 1). The Natural Way School recognizes that a Chinese cultural emphasis aligns with the children's personal experience and cultural awareness. Chinese educational philosophy places a great emphasis on humanity and culture education. The curriculum design robustly connects Chinese people and their lifestyle and attitude; in other words, it connects Chinese students with their Chinese culture.

The school saw the importance of Chinese educational philosophy, Chinese culture, and Chinese language development for the promotion of children's English and Chinese language acquisition and cultural identity. As a result, English education in

early childhood at the New Way School is based firmly upon Chinese language and cultural identity development and thereby reduces the hegemony of English. Some researchers such as Fishman (1996) and Kramsch (1998) provide evidence that language and culture cannot be separated under any circumstances. The theory of culture-bound language and language-bound culture (Kramsch, 1998) supports the idea that using Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture in the bilingual program can provide Chinese language and cultural identity development. Culture is considered the progress of the individual or development of the group throughout human history and contexts; more specifically, learning a first culture is simply a specific type of human learning related to patterns of human communication and identification (Damen, 1987). Basically, learning a first culture is a process of “indoctrination” (Damen, 1987, p.140). Enculturation constructs a sense of cultural or social identity. This means that people who have grown up with the first language and the first culture naturally develop language and culture in close relationship and know to change and adapt their language patterns to meet their needs in the social contexts. Noting the importance of culture learning, both bilingual first culture and second culture learning are processes which include the nature of stages of enculturation and acculturation. Thus, bilingual culture learning needs a specialized context in which the environment should be made as open as possible for intercultural communication. In other words, Chinese culture-based learning can help children find themselves in and understand the importance of Chinese language in Taiwan society.

The children in the bilingual program were given lots of opportunities to interact positively with Chinese culture which represents Chinese's values, beliefs and patterned ways of living and to expand their understanding of it.

Eventually, cultural competence, which influences children's motivation, attitudes, and learning style in both learners and instructors, impacts the way they learn both languages. Bilingual first culture learning could increase children's awareness of the importance of first language learning, which can help to fully develop the first language. This is important because the first language plays a positive role in L2 learning Cumming (1989) and Fu (2009). The first language provides a way for English learners "to express their thoughts, vent their emotions, forge new identities, and understand their new positions and relationships to others around them" (Fu, 2009, p.31) as the second language develops. Children in the beginning stage of bilingual education cannot avoid mixed-language (Fu, 2009). First language learning also helps students cope with the cognitive demands of second language acquisition (Cumming, 1989). Hence, the bilingual program at the Natural Way School allows students to use their native language to communicate. Students persistently depend upon their Chinese language knowledge to clarify meaning, to recall prior knowledge, and to make sense of new knowledge learning. Chinese language not only bridges unfamiliar information with familiar knowledge, but also supports English language learning. Perez and Torres-Guzman (1996) support it:

Children who develop proficiency in using their native language to communicate, to gain information, to solve problems, and to think can easily learn to use a second language in similar ways (p.96).

More significantly, the children who attend the bilingual program at the School learn English through a Chinese perspective, which includes Chinese values,

philosophy, culture, customs, and ideas. The familiar cultural activities of the curriculum allow students to connect their life experiences. The cultural curriculum of the school based on Chinese culture not only facilitates cognitive development and knowledge acquisition in different subject areas, but also provides the children the opportunity to develop cultural identity.

Although children do not learn about Chinese culture in the Chinese language, the cultural ideas and knowledge can be expressed by both the English language and the Chinese language. Vygotsky (1986) shows how thought is transformed into language. He points out that language begins as ego-central speech that is economical in words and hardly understood by others. As egocentral speech develops as an inner speech, an internalized speech, and finally become the closest form to thought. This is the form of pure meaning, or the most abbreviated form of language. Eventually, thought is transformed into the communicative language --- thought in the conventional form. If we agree that culture and language are closed (Damen, 1987; McLaughlin, 1984; Brown, 1994; Michael Byram and Karen Risager's, 1999; Schumann, 1978), children learning about Chinese culture in English are strongly supported. Children must have English language and Chinese language learning at the same time because thought is not just expressed by languages, but it exists through languages. Thought, meaning, and languages are interrelated and interwoven together (Vygotsky, 1986).

Investigation of the philosophy of the School found the emphasis of Chinese educational values and the integration of some Western educational philosophy meshes well with Chinese philosophy and beliefs. The Natural Way School embraces significant Chinese educational philosophy and concepts that have a foundation in traditional

Chinese attitudes and the ideas of Confucianism and apply to education in the modern bilingual classroom. Although Western educational philosophy provides empirical ideas and theories, the School's bilingual curriculum is also supported by classic Chinese educational philosophy from Chinese culture or Chinese literary tradition, including the concepts of Confucius, Lao-Zi, Meng-Zi, Zhuang-Zi, and Wang, Shou-rin, and Chinese classic books such as *Three Hundred Tang Poems*, *Character Classic*, and *I-Ching*. Thus, overall, the educational philosophy of the School and its curriculum design is derived from Chinese culture, Chinese values, Chinese beliefs, and Chinese ideas.

Cummins' Range of Contextual Support and Degree of Cognitive Involvement in Communicative Activities uses four quadrants for proper tasks and strategies to help ELLs at varying proficiency levels from social language to academic language. Cummins suggests that bilingual children must use 'context-embedded' language in order to avoid cognitive deficits (lower-level threshold) and to show advantages in cognitive development (higher-level threshold). Early stages of language learning unavoidably cope with concrete and highly contextualized material. Although the students at the school learned a second language in the classroom, they were provided in a rich experiential base which includes cultural hands-on activities based on Chinese educational philosophy. Thus, the young children appeared to be better second language learners because the culture and philosophy learning is less cognitively demanding (Cummins, 1981). They learned to function very well in their second language and first language.

With appropriate attachments such as knowledge, beliefs, art and customs of society, cultural identity is socially constructed. As Berger (1970) said: "One identifies

oneself, as one is identified by others, by being located in a common world” (p. 378). The interviewees in this study strongly supported this viewpoint and perspective.

As the concepts and aims of Chinese culture and Chinese literary tradition are formulated into the curriculum, the 24 solar terms are the concrete contents of the curriculum; the solar terms embody a set of abstract ideas and concepts within the designed curriculum and make the ideas and concepts become tangible and doable practices. The 24 solar terms thematic curriculum integrates Chinese culture into the content areas of mathematics, science, health, social studies, music, art, and physical education and the learning of these content areas takes place in social contexts and involves natural phenomenon connected to Chinese ideas.

This is to say that nature and humanity are learned and integrated into the curriculum from a Chinese perspective which includes knowledge of farming, planting, the four seasons, insects, animals, relationships, family, holidays/festivals, and customs. As children of the school perceive the world from a Chinese perspective, naturally they identify themselves with that perspective. As Singer (1982) described, identity groups are formed by aggregations of persons sharing similar perceptions of the world. Lum (1982) says that “identity is a social process in which one balances what s/he thinks oneself to be and what other believes that one to be...” (p. 386). In other words, children in bilingual program go through a social process in the School, which shares the same cultural activities as people in the society; naturally, they develop their cultural identity. In the bilingual program of the Natural Way School, native culture has a respected role in the second language classrooms; therefore children become more comfortable with all that it implies than they are (Damen, 1987).

“A school should provide an environment for intercultural communication and learning and this is the only way in which cultural contact can be made” (Damen, 1987, p. 7). The Natural Way School’s bilingual program highlights Chinese cultural learning in order to make the cultural connection and enhance cultural identity while promoting intercultural communication. The Natural Way School appears to have been successful in aiding children in the direction of cultural learning. Chinese cultural aspects of the curriculum are emphasized as much as possible and embedded in order to overcome the emphasis of English education. Children grow to understand the relationship between themselves and society. Intercultural communication is also developed as the children grow their bilingual and bicultural competences.

Implications of the study

Culture as a Focus Can Be Taught in an Early Childhood Bilingual Program to Avoid the Tilt Toward Language Hegemony

The Natural Way School has designed a bilingual program for English education in which Chinese educational philosophy and Chinese culture are emphasized. An understanding of the philosophy of the School, together with an understanding of the principles of English teaching, enables English teachers to prepare lesson plans that join languages and culture and increase students’ concepts of cultural difference. Moreover, since Chinese culture is reinforced in bilingual education, the hegemony of English is decreased.

An Understanding of the Target Culture in the Bilingual Education Can Also Help Students Understand Native Culture

Bilingual first culture learning takes place in a conscious and purposeful process. Therefore, bilingual learners develop self-awareness and consciously invoke the attitudes required to learn about another culture. Pre-K children are in the process of

moving from egocentricity to reciprocity. Thus, exposure to a foreign language can help the children move toward intercultural competence. “An awareness of the global community can be enhanced when children have the opportunity to experience involvement with another culture through a foreign language” (Curtain and Pesola, 1994, p.4). Obviously younger children may not understand the many differences and similarities between Chinese and Western cultures. However, as they encounter cultural events and feel interested, happy, excited, curious, or surprised, they learn about and acquire a better understanding of these values and ideas. For example, children in the Natural Way School celebrated Western New Years and Chinese New Year or Halloween (Western ghosts) and the Chinese Ghost Festival (Eastern ghosts). Children are able to perceive the Chinese New Year and to reflect upon the Western New Year as seen from their perspective and to compare themselves to others. Moreover, graduated students from the bilingual program could explain and compare the terms of the two cultures, accepting that conflicting perceptions are not always reconcilable.

Cultural Curriculum Can Integrate All the Subjects of the Early Childhood Bilingual Program

In early childhood bilingual education languages, science, math, social studies, and fine arts are integrated into a cultural curriculum. I found that the cultural curriculum of the School, the Chinese 24 solar terms curriculum, invites students into meaningful contexts that facilitate learning all subjects. Actually, a variety of cultural experiences not only help students learn the subject of social studies, but also other subjects, such as science, math, music, fine arts, drama, and physical education.

For example, making lanterns and yuan-xiao (sticky rice balls/dumpling) for the Chinese Lantern Festival are cultural activities which integrate a variety of lessons such

as science, math, social studies, music, languages, and fine arts. Students learn the legends of Lantern Festival, the process of making lanterns and yuan-xiao, the way of celebrating the Lantern Festival, and the meaning of playing lanterns and eating yuan-xiao. Thus, well-prepared cultural lesson plans can include all subjects in one cultural activity. The lessons provide the students experience and exploration of meaningful and cultural contexts.

Cultural Curriculum is ‘Context-Embedded’ Learning which Simultaneously Reinforces the Children’s Acquisition of Culture and Knowledge of Subjects.

Like children in a monolingual program, young children in the bilingual program learn all the subjects required at these ages. These preschoolers are in a language developmental stage but the school cannot wait for learning until their language usage becomes proficient. Thus, cultural activities can provide a meaningful environment for performance which can simulate children to develop language proficiency. The cultural “context-embedded” (Cummins, 1981) learning is supported by a wide range of clues and can encourage children to enthusiastically communicate.

The curriculum provides concrete and highly contextualized knowledge. Teachers can make their instruction even more cognitively engaging by providing students with hands-on opportunities to do more difficult processes within logical activities that have a simple structure. Yearly curriculum planning shares the same themes from one year to another, the repeated theme-studies go deeper during the second and third years in Pre-K. During these years learning about habitual and real life experiences gradually goes deeper and becomes more extensive. Through repetition of the solar terms, meaningful context, the use of concrete materials, and daily hands-on activities, the students not only continue to develop their knowledge of all subjects in early childhood

education, but also develop a deeper understanding about their culture, language, and knowledge of subject development.

Native Cultural Learning Allows the Use of the Native Language to Facilitate the Learning of a Second Language and Cultural Development

The ideal goals of a native cultural curriculum in addition to the mastery of subjects are that the students become functionally proficient in bilingual education and that, through the subject learning, the students become functionally proficient in culture, while continuing to develop skills and become more proficient in their native language. The School has been successful in this implementation.

In addition, early childhood bilingual second language learning does not pay attention to the learning grammar, sentence-patterns, and vocabulary; instead, their focus is on communication of meaning and interaction, that process of acquisition parallels first language acquisition. Thus, using the first language can directly increase comprehension of cultural learning, and L1 and L2 languages have the opportunity to develop. Abundant research reports (Cummins, 1981; Curtain & Pesola, 1994; Fu, 2009) on L1 and L2 acquisition have described the positive effect of L1 usage in L2 learning. This is a real phenomenon that graduated students from the bilingual program not only demonstrate an awareness of cultural events at an appropriate level of intellectual development and make comparisons between the two cultures, but also they develop appropriate attitudes toward the learning of two languages.

Limitations of the Study

The research was conducted for two years and involved a pilot study and the actual study. I interviewed the School's founder, teachers, administrators, students, and parents and did observations for two months in both 2009 and 2010. Several questions

and doubts arose during the data collection. Therefore, some limitations of this study occurred to me and need to be discussed. First, I previously worked for the School for almost nine years from 1997-2006. Because of my personal affection, preferences and familiarity with the school, some school's events are taken for granted by me. I might not seriously consider some events important.

Secondly, observation should be consistent over a long period of time; however, my four months of observation was separated into two years limiting my data collection and observations. The data from my observation does not have the longevity needed to thoroughly answer my questions.

Recommendation for Future Research

This study focuses on the early childhood bilingual program of the Natural Way School and does not track and analyze the achievement tests of Chinese and English language proficiency of former students who studied in the School for several years nor does it measure the students' L1 and L2 achievement after they graduated to show the influence of early childhood bilingual education. Therefore, future study can focus on a more formal assessment of the bilingual program. Further, a program such as this one can be directly compared with an early childhood bilingual program which does not employ Chinese culture as the essential curriculum. Such an investigation could provide more evidence to prove whether Chinese culture is an essential influence for Chinese language proficiency and cultural identity development.

Also, some issues remain unclear here, for instance: cultural conflicts between Chinese and English instructors, a comprehensive assessment of former early childhood students, a well structured training program for the English and Chinese teachers, the emotional problems in early childhood education resulting from mutual

interferences that occur between L1 and L2 acquisition, and a two-way bilingual program of literacy development in kindergarten. More study of these issues will help educators and language teachers have greater success in early childhood bilingual education in the future.

Conclusion

The Taiwanese face the dilemma of deciding whether they do or do not support English education in early ages. Moreover, some researchers, Bialystok and Hakuta (1994) had some thought that if children grow to learn a second language at very young age, they might lose some of their first language or even replace the first language with the second language. Thus, one must ask, should a balanced bilingual program support true bilingualism? In the United States, a transitional program only supports the native language until children have learned English. However, in Taiwan, the bilingual person is still a member of the society, whose way of thinking and acting and whose values are familiar to others. Thus, how to prevent the loss of ability in native language and culture identity becomes the primary question that one must ask. My research describes how one school answered those questions in order to solve the problems that concern and worry all Taiwanese. The school provided a 'balanced and true' bilingual program in which two languages and two cultures were developed in balance. The Natural Way School's curriculum supports the native language and emphasizes the native culture. Based on the Chinese educational philosophical ideas and the Chinese cultural curriculum, the Natural Way School attempts to prevent Chinese language and cultural identity loss. My research indicates that the school demonstrates that Chinese culture and Chinese educational philosophy can be integrated into English education and

naturally cultivate children's positive attitudes toward the Chinese language and culture identity. This integration of Chinese culture and Chinese educational philosophy reduces English hegemony (Tsao, 1998) by balancing two languages and learning about two cultures in early childhood bilingual education.

Additionally, the use of Chinese culture, Chinese educational philosophy, and Chinese traditional literature is not only effective in improving students' cultural awareness, but also in meeting the knowledge objectives of Taiwanese early childhood education. Besides cultural learning and knowledge of the subjects learned in early childhood education, the Chinese language was reinforced and valued for conducting the activities of cultural activities. The school addresses the concerns of Taiwanese educators and research scholars via a curriculum which helps students increase their sensitivity to and understanding of language, values, customs and traditions of the Chinese.

The curriculum not only illustrates a focus on Chinese culture but also facilitates the children in meeting the knowledge objectives of early childhood education. This is a significant and inspiring curriculum for parents and students and students who studied in the School. Such a curriculum can contribute to early childhood bilingual programs and offer ideas and solutions for educators who are concerned that English education interferes with young children's native language development and cultural identity.

Overall, the Natural Way School's curriculum demonstrates how early childhood bilingual education based on native cultural learning for second language learners can result in truly 'balanced' bilingualism. In Taiwan, English language learning often is not balanced between the two languages and cultures. However, provision of an

environment where children understand their culture and how view their native language as essential within the culture is very important because it aids children in learning to believe their language and culture is valuable. A balanced bilingual education supports native language and culture and enhances cultural identity development.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What are some major reasons that made you decide to enroll your child in a Pre-K bilingual program?
2. Why did you choose the Natural Way School?
3. Are you satisfied with the Pre-K bilingual program at the Natural Way Children's school? Why?
4. Are you worried about your child being confused about his/her cultural identity because he/she learned English at a very young age? Why?
5. How do you balance Chinese and English learning at home? Do you have any concern that he/she learnt two languages at the same time?
6. Do you think there is any conflict between Chinese learning and English learning? Why? Please give examples.
7. You sent your child to a Pre-k bilingual program at very young age. What expectations do you have of your child and of the program?
8. If you had to decide all over again, would you enroll your children in bilingual programs at very young ages?
9. Please describe the English/Chinese activities that affect your child the most?
10. Compare your attitudes of bilingual education with those of other parents whose children are not in bilingual education programs. What is the difference? Please give some examples.
11. Describe the characteristics of what you believe to be a bilingual child?
12. What kind of practice would enable your child to become bilingual?

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. How long have you worked for the school?
2. Do you have experience working with bilingual students? What's your educational background?
3. What are your beliefs about bilingual education?
4. What's your major responsibility in the school?
5. Can you use your own words to describe what the Natural Way School is?
6. How do you work with teachers? Please give me some examples.
7. How do you carry out the school's mission? Please give some examples.
8. What are differences/similarities between the Natural Way School and other bilingual schools?

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FOUNDER

1. When did you found the Natural Way School? Why did you want to found the Natural Way School?
2. What's the school's mission? How did you develop it? Who or what educational philosophy influenced you?
3. What are the major influences that made you decide to build up the school this way?
4. What do you think are characteristics of a good bilingual school? Do you think your school has been a qualified bilingual school? Why or why not?
5. How do you recruit your teachers? Describe the qualities of what you believe to be a good teacher in your bilingual program?
6. How does the school design bilingual curriculum? (Whose responsibility is it?)
7. How do you train your teachers to carry out the school's mission?
8. How do you evaluate your teachers and administrators?
9. What is your major job in this school?

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. Tell me about your English/Chinese learning experience?
2. Please describe the activities that affect your English/Chinese learning?
3. Compare your English learning attitudes with your peers. Do you see any differences? Please give some examples.
4. In your opinion, how does learning English influence learning Chinese? Positive or negative.
5. What English/Chinese holidays (festivals) do you like the best? Why?
6. In your opinion, what are the differences between Western culture and Chinese culture?
7. If you have a choice, what language would you like to learn? Why?
8. What do you think about the benefit of learning English/Chinese?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Shih-Fen Yeh was born in Taiwan. She earned her Bachelor of Chinese Literature at Fu-Jen University in Taipei, Taiwan, in July 1985. She completed her master's degree in the ESOL program at University of Florida in December 1995. She taught Freshmen English at Tun-Ghai University and English Teaching Methods at National Taichung University of Education in Taichung from 1999 to 2006. Meanwhile, she was an assistant principal at a private children's school from 1998 to 2006.

While studying for her Ph. D., she was a teaching assistant for four years in the Curriculum and Instruction Department at the University of Florida's College of Education. She taught children's literature and language arts to pre-service teachers. Also, she taught advanced students Chinese academic writing in the Chinese Language Department for one semester and taught the Chinese language at Lincoln Middle School in Gainesville, Florida for two years.

Shih-Fen's research interests include bilingual education, second language writing, children's literature, literacy, and culture learning. She has made ten research presentations at international, national, and state education conferences. In addition, she co-authored a book about games for language evaluation published by the UrBEST publishers in Taiwan.