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Taiwanese cultural content in English-as-a-foreign-language elementary education

Yi-Ting Wang

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TAIWANESE CULTURAL CONTENT IN ENGLISH-AS-A-

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

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Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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by

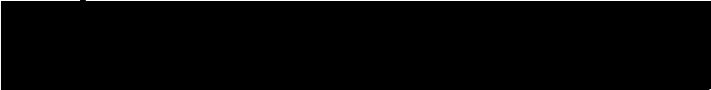Yi-Ting Wang

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Approved by:

Lynne Diaz-Rico, First Reader   June 1, 2004
                                                 Date

Mary Jean Comadena, Second Reader

ABSTRACT

Teaching culture is an essential part of teaching language. However, the teaching of local culture is short-changed in Taiwanese English education. Thus, this project focuses on crosscultural teaching, comparing Taiwanese and Western cultural content such as folktales. This comparison is based on presenting Taiwanese cultural content. Four key concepts of culture are examined in a literature review and lead to a theoretical framework. These include awareness of alphabetic print for children whose language is ideographic, crosscultural education as a motivator, using Taiwanese culture and folktales to teach English, and aural comprehension using choral reading and songs. Finally, a sample unit is featured that demonstrates the use of these key concepts for English language teaching.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Role of English in Modern Taiwan

English has an important function in Taiwan. Although

English is a foreign language, it plays a large role in

schooling. English is one of the contents of the advanced

examinations of public officials as well as of the

University Entrance Examination. Moreover, 80 percent of

the national economy relies on import and export trade and

English is the predominant language people use for trade

communication. Therefore, most of a given company's

employees are supposed to be proficient in English. In

addition, most textbooks used in higher education and

homepages on the Web are written in English, so it is much

easier for people to send and receive information if they

have good ability in English.

Condition of English Teaching in Taiwan's
    Elementary Schools

Because English is an essential foreign language in

modern Taiwan, some local governments started in 1996 to

include English as a subject for elementary schools

starting in the second grade. Since 2001, the Taiwanese

Ministry of Education (TME) has made English a compulsory

course in elementary school. All school children have to study English starting from fifth grade. Moreover, in 2005, TME plans to expand English instruction beginning in third grade. Taiwanese students are expected to learn English as early as possible. As a result, depending on local areas, students in various grades have begun to learn English at different times. For example, students who live in Tainan County will start to learn English in the second grade, but students who live in Hualien County will start to learn English in the third grade.

Furthermore, some students have more experience learning English. Although Taiwanese students can learn English in school, many parents prefer to send their children to "cram" schools after a day of public school. Cram schools are private institutions that teach English to all kinds of students after school. Two of the most important reasons why parents do so are first, because they want their children to do well on senior high school and university entrance examinations and English is one of the components of the test. Second, parents feel that it is not enough for their children to learn English only in school.

The fact is that many teachers of formal and cram schools emphasize the importance of learning about the

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United States as a target culture. However, according to the aim of curriculum announced by TME, one of the basic goals of students learning English is to learn both the target and native customs. Also, students are expected to introduce their native culture to others. This is because Taiwanese want to develop their intercultural communication. The first step to reach that goal is to let members of other countries become familiar with Taiwanese culture. Because English is the most popular language, students need to learn how to introduce Taiwanese culture in English. Instead of just learning about the target culture, the native culture should also be emphasized.

Target Teaching Level

My target teaching levels are second and third grades. Although I have a year of experience in teaching English to students in fourth to sixth grades in Taiwan, I still prefer to teach elementary school students who are in the second and third grades. When I taught, most of the students were in their first year of learning English. Drawing upon my experience in instructing basic literacy, I feel that the earliest years of education cannot be ignored. If a student does not learn well during their first several years of learning a language, this child would lack interest in working on English and would need

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additional effort to keep up with classmates. Thus, primary-level instructors need to be well trained.

After 2005, the second and third grades will be students' first and second year of studying English. One of the main goals of teaching English at primary school in Taiwan is to help students love to learn English, so it will be essential for these students to have a firm foundation. If students can enjoy learning a language, they will absorb knowledge more efficiently. Hence, the most important thing I must learn is how to teach a class of second year of English and how to help students enjoy learning.

Purpose of the Project

Because English proficiency highly regarded in Taiwan, teachers and parents all hope children can learn English as early as possible. However, young learners do not have much of a chance to use the English language beyond class. Also, school children do not have any formal examination of their English proficiency before they enter junior high school. That may cause elementary students to experience a lack of motivation while studying English because they do not use or practice the language. Therefore, the problem

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of children's lack of ambition to work on their English needs to be addressed.

The purpose of the project is to further the idea of crosscultural curricula in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) at the elementary level in Taiwan. I hope that students will enhance their decoding skills and print awareness through learning Taiwanese folktales as well as Western poems and songs in English class. Therefore, their English language proficiency can improve.

Context of the Project

The thesis portion of the project is divided into five chapters. Chapter One provides background information about English education in Taiwan, and the context, purpose, and significance of the project. Chapter Two consists of a review of relevant literature. Chapter Three discusses the importance of the literature review in the teaching of English to elementary school students and proposes a theoretical framework. Chapter Four describes a teaching unit of six lessons based on concepts presented in the proposed framework in the previous chapter. Finally, Chapter Five previews how the lessons presented in the Appendix should be assessed. References conclude the project.

Significance of the Project

This study synthesizes theoretical concepts and proposes relevant curricula that can incorporate students' prior knowledge about English, so children may absorb knowledge presented in English more easily. This project also addresses both the native culture and target cultures, featuring content which may also be applicable to the English classes of other grades in elementary schools in Taiwan.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Awareness of Print for Children of
Ideographic Languages

Introduction

Print awareness is an important readiness for

reading. It can help children understand how a language

looks in print form (Help Children with Print Concepts,

2003). Taylor (1983) indicated that printed words are an

inescapable part of a culture. As a result, many children

are aware of print at a very young age from the stimulus

in the environment around them.

However, in cultures with ideographic rather than

alphabetic language, print awareness differs from that one

might find in say, an English-language culture. For

example, Taiwanese students do not have a chance to

contact English print outside of English class. In other

words, pupils have Chinese print awareness, but lack

English print awareness before they learn English.

Taking into consideration this limitation in the

development of English print awareness, the goal of this

topic is to strengthen the English print awareness of the

children whose first language is ideographic. This section

is divided into several parts. First, the definition of

print awareness is discussed. Then, the print concepts of English are compared with Chinese, to find out how to develop Taiwanese students' English print awareness. Lastly, some assessments of print awareness are introduced so instructors can measure how much print awareness students already have.

Defining Awareness of Print

Print awareness is a realization of print-related experiences that can facilitate reading acquisition (Kontos, 1988). Starting as young as two years old, young children begin to have impressions on the print around them (Wepner, 1985). These impressions may come from logos, posters, traffic sign, etc., that supply pre-schoolers concepts about print. Consequently, when children grow up and enter school, they already have had some prior knowledge about reading.

Print awareness is also defined as an understanding of print concepts that are an important precursor of reading development among young children (Roberts, 1992). Clay (1991), Reutzel and Cooter (1996), and Zarrillo (2002) noted that the concepts of print include the following: 1) meaning; 2) directionality; 3) distinction between sentences, words, and letters; 4) book

orientation; 5) use of punctuation marks (each of these will be discussed in turn).

Print Carries Meaning. Words are not insignificant symbols, but are used to transmit messages. What people say can be written down in words and read. Thus, readers should know that print has meaning. Also, they have to know that print is read, not pictures.

Directionality. Reading a book requires the knowledge of directionality. The rules about how reading worksw are also called conventions (Cunningham, 2000). Words written in English are read across the pages from left to right on any line. When a line is finished, the eyes make a return sweep to the next line and read from left to right again. If there is more than one line on a page, it is read from the top to the bottom. If both a left page and a right page have sentences, the ones on the left page are read first. To turn a page, one turns the right page to the left side. Moreover, readers start at the front of a book, which is stapled in the left margin and goes toward the back. Because different languages have their own conventions, a successful reader has to understand the conventions of print of his or her language.

Sentences, Words and Letters are Different. In an alphabetic language, one must understand that words,

letters, and sentences have distinct junctions. Although they are all written from left to right, they are different units. Sentences are made up of words and words are formed by letters. Moreover, the letters are divided into capital and lower case letters. A good reader should be able to identify the differences between them.

Book Orientation. Having book orientation means a reader knows how to begin to read a book. It includes the knowledge of where the cover of a book is, what is the difference between the author's name and the title, and where the story starts.

Use of Punctuation Marks. Punctuation marks are the most difficult part for children to learn. They are abstract marks. For example, a question mark is used in writing at the end of a question. Nevertheless, a successful reader can tell why the punctuation marks are used.

Phonemic Awareness in a Non-Alphabetic Language

English and Chinese belong to different language systems. English is an alphabetic system in which the letters have relationships to phonemes, whereas Chinese is an ideographic language that has a more direct relationship to meaning (Barnitz, 1982). Taiwanese students have to learn notional phonetic alphabets when

they attend elementary school. Notional phonetic

alphabets, with units that are a bit like phonemes, have

twenty-seven letters including consonants and vowels, but

they only assist students to pronounce a word. Also, the

combination of units is not a word and does not carry

meaning (example, "ㄅㄟ," which is a syllable but not a

word).

Taiwanese students, however, have some concepts that

pertain to English print awareness. Affected by the

Western languages, modern Chinese books are divided into

two types. One can be read from top to bottom in columns

and the other can be read from right to left in rows. In

addition, punctuation in Chinese resembles that of English.

The print concepts of Chinese and English are compared in

the Table 1.

According to Table 1, there are some similarities

between English and Chinese. In both, print carries

meaning. Still, the use of punctuation is the same because

this system was introduced from the West to ancient China,

as was the left-to-right written directionality. Some

kinds of books are written from left to right, top to

bottom, and opened from right to left: for instance, a

mathematics book.

On the other hand, the chief differences between
English and Chinese lie in the concepts about letters and
words. A letter is the smallest unit in English while a
word is the smallest one in Chinese. Taiwanese students
may have a hard time distinguishing letters from words.
Moreover, people can read an English word by their
knowledge of phonetics even if the word is a new one. Yet,
in Chinese only when people are taught a word can they
read it out loud. According to Barr and Johnson (1991),
knowledge of words and letters is one of the stages of
learning the nature and functions of print. Thus, EFL
teachers should put more emphasis on this point when
teaching reading.

Table 1. Comparing and Contrasting English and Chinese
Concepts about Print

	English	Chinese
Meaning of Print	Print carries meaning.	
Letter and word concepts	Sentences, words, and letters are different.	Sentences and words are different. No letters are used.
Book Orientation	Books are bound on the left side.	Books are bound on the right side or left side.
Punctuation Marks	The meaning and the use of punctuation marks are almost the same.	
Directionality	Sentences are read from left to right and top to bottom.	Sentences can be read like English or read from top to bottom and right to left.
	The left page is read before the right page.	Pages may be read from left to right or right to left.
	Books are opened from right to left.	Some books are opened from right to left and some are from left to right.

Developing Print Awareness in English Learners

Because EFL learners do not have much chance to observe English written language in their real life, they need English teachers to help them gain awareness of English print when they begin to learn reading. When instructed by a teacher, children can understand why people read. However, it is a difficult task for beginners to understand how people read (Barr & Johnson, 1991).

Children cannot see inside the minds of adults. They must guess at the process and form hunches that change over time or use their experience of reading Chinese.

Unfortunately, a teacher cannot tell young children directly how to read (Clay, 2002). They learn concepts about print as they observe written language in their environment, listen to their teachers read books to them, and experiment with reading themselves (Barr & Johnson, 1991; Cohn, 1981; Tompkins, 2003). Therefore, EFL teachers shall assist pupils to have English print according to how they learn print concepts. There are some ways that can develop print awareness of children, as are explained below.

Arranging English Print in Children's Environment. Instructors can arrange settings that are full of English print to accumulate the print awareness of learners. Alaska State Department of Education (1999) suggested teachers use activities that highlight the meaning, use and production of print in classroom signs, labels, nametags, posters, calendars, and lists.

Reading Books to Students. Students imitate how their teachers read a book. Barr and Johnson (1991) indicated that children learn about the conventions of print from being read to; for example, teachers can help children

learn about the arrangement of text by showing and explaining where a book begins. Teachers can point out features of the book and point to the word while reading to develop children's concepts about print (Cunningham, 2000). Also, an instructor can ask children to point out a letter or a word that he or she pronounced to strengthen their distinction between a letter and a word.

Giving Children Chances to Read. After observation and instruction from the adult, students will imitate how to read. Shen (2002) stated that students learn how to read through reading. They correct and improve their print awareness and reading skill while they are reading. As students read, teachers can observe how they read to make sure they have correct print awareness.

Assessing Print Awareness

The Concepts About Print observation test is an assessment invented by Clay (2002) that can measure three aspects about print awareness: what personal experiences children have had with print, what they have noticed, and what they have ignored. In the test, the teacher appears to be merely reading the story in the task booklet to a child, but they are also asking the child to help how to read. On each page they ask a question or two to check if

this child knows the concepts. For instance, teachers ask the child to show where they can start reading.

Before and after students learn about print awareness, teachers should give them some print awareness tests to make sure how many concepts about print the children have acquired. The reason this is important is because not every child properly learns how to read. Barr and Johnson (1991) discovered that some students fail to explore the nature of print even though they are native speakers. They have a hard time making connections about the nature of the relationship between print and meaning. Some EFL students may be no exception.

Still, there is no way to explain the reading code to a young child. The terms about print awareness are too abstract for kids to discuss, so students cannot be tested directly to explain how to read. Therefore, the exams should be more practical.

The Concept About Print test is developed according to two major dimensions. First, print awareness is a continual development (Print Awareness Continuum, 2003). Children first should find out that print is different from pictures. Then they know that print carries meaning, and has practical uses. Later, they learn that print is organized; words are made up of letters and have capital

letters. At last, they know the meaning of punctuation. Second, print awareness overlaps with metalinguistic awareness when it includes phoneme segmentation, sound-symbol correspondence, and aural consonant knowledge (Taylor & Blum [1981], cited in Huba & Konros, 1985). Thus, the concepts that children should develop for print awareness and the metalinguistic awareness are all included in this test.

Another test is advised by Cunningham (2000). It is not as formal as is The Concept About Print test. It does not have a fixed format. Teachers are supposed to make a record of children's reading process. This test can be divided into many small parts and preceptors can evaluate pupils' reading progress when they are reading Big Books or participating in predictable chart activities. According to the checklist, teachers then can incorporate more practice on children's weak aspects.

However, there is no print awareness test especially for EFL learners. If a student wants to read a book successfully, he or she has to know all the concepts of print that a native speaker does. Therefore, EFL teachers may also use the assessment applied to native students to EFL students.

Conclusion

Print awareness is a child's earliest introduction to literacy. It is an understanding about how print works (Gunning, 2003). Children learn about print concepts from the observing the print environment around them, watching and listening how their teachers read, and reading by themselves. Through this stimulation, they gradually build their awareness of print.

However, English and Chinese belong to different language systems. Taiwanese students need to have print awareness when they read English books. EFL teachers have to build a print-rich environment at school and do a lot of reading in class to catch up on students' lack of English print stimulation before they start school (Reutzel, Oda, & Moore, 1989).

Through the assessments, instructors can evaluate what personal experiences students have had before they begin to read. Instructors will also see areas what students notice and what they ignore when they start to read. To sum up, when a child understands what to attend to, in what order, and recognizes the shapes and positions of letters and words, this will open other doors to English literacy learning.

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Crosscultural Education as a Motivator

Introduction

In the past, reading and writing literature were the major focus areas of teaching a target language (Richards & Rodgers, 1999). The central goal of foreign-language teaching was to pass on its literature or assist learners to benefit from mental discipline and intellectual development. Students were taught rules of morphology and syntax and on this basis were expected to learn to become good *litterateurs*. However, the knowledge taught in classes was usually too theoretical to be applied in daily life.

Gradually, functional applications become the focus of target-language education. A person who learns a foreign language successfully can communicate with other people efficiently and appropriately (Tainan Bureau of Education, 2000). Hence, in addition to reading and writing, listening and speaking skills have become increasingly emphasized. Students are now required to possess language skills and to integrate these four skills in their daily lives.

Moreover, culture is associated with language teaching (Woo, 2000). Culture is the total way of life of a group or society (Straub, 1999). Because individuals are

highly influenced by their culture, it is important for individuals to understand one another's culture in order to communicate fluently. However, culture cannot be easily taught. As the world becomes a global village, people around the world interact much more frequently. Exchanging information via the Internet from any part of the earth is easy and common. As a result, crosscultural education is necessary.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how crosscultural education can be a motivation in a language class. First, the significance of crosscultural teaching will be discussed. Second, the role of crosscultural teaching in a language class will be examined, including how teachers can apply crosscultural teaching.

The Significance of Crosscultural Teaching

Culture has to be taught in a language class (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000; Pak, 1999; Seelye, 1984; Woo, 2000). Learning only to speak and write is inadequate because language is not merely a tool for communication, but also a system of representation for perception and thinking (Bennett, 1997). Humans exchange knowledge, thoughts, or values when they talk to each other and these messages are all affected by cultures. Culture is "the art, beliefs, behavior, ideas etc. of a particular society or group of

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people" (Longman, 1997). Human beings cannot be separated from their culture. For example, as students learn new ways to interact with each other, that in itself is a part of culture. Bochner (1982) asserted that speakers are more likely to communicate successfully with each other if they also have some knowledge of each other's culture. Therefore, culture simply cannot be ignored in any language class (Seelye, 1984).

Moreover, explicit teaching of the target culture can help students visualize a total picture of the target language (C. L. Chen, 2000; Pak, 1999). If people learn a language without knowing its culture, it is like understanding a person without knowing his or her personality. Therefore, teaching culture allows learners to practice communicating in the target language and build greater understanding of the values inherent in the foreign culture.

However, culture teaching is not enough in foreign-language classes nowadays (Cultural Teaching, n.d.). People around the world have begun to interact with each other regularly in recent decades, especially after the invention of the Internet. The high frequency of interaction makes the ability of communication more significant. Interaction is mutual. For example, when the

topic of holidays relating to death is discussed, a
Taiwanese may mention the Zhong-yuan Festival and an
American may refer to Halloween. It is important for the
Taiwanese to understand and communicate about the contents
of the Zhong-yuan Festival for both parties to smoothly
exchange information and vice versa. In this view,
crosscultural teaching is essential.

Crosscultural teaching is more effective than simply
teaching about culture (Cultural Teaching, n.d.).
Crosscultural means "belonging to or involving two or more
societies, countries, or cultures" (Longman, 1997). Thus,
crosscultural teaching can be defined as a teaching that
involves two or more societies, countries, or cultures. In
teaching about culture, too many teachers present only the
target culture, whereas in crosscultural teaching, the
native culture is taught as well as the target culture.
Students have a deep linguistic linkage to their home,
family, and cultural heritage (Saravia-Shore & Arvizu,
1992). Therefore, learners who understand both cultures
will not solely idolize the target culture and devalue
their native culture.

Using Crosscultural Study as a Motivator

The process of teaching a language itself is
time-consuming work. In order to learn a language well,

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teachers should train students in the five structures of language: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Phonology is about the sound patterns of a language. Morphology is the study of the meaning units in a language. Syntax refers to the structure of sentence patterns. Semantics deals with the meaning of individual words and of large units, and lastly, pragmatics is about how language is used in a social context (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002).

Teachers need to supply motivation to prompt students to learn a language. This can make language teaching more easy and efficient. Motivation is a central element along with language aptitude in determining success in training students in a second language in the classroom setting (Gardner, 2001.) Motivation cannot be absent from the very beginning to the end of a class.

Teachers can use crosscultural teaching as a motivator. Both target and native culture teaching can inspire in learners the curiosity to study. A. H. Chen (2000) stated that cultural stimulation will make language learning more successful and practical. Jacobson (1996) asserted that a new culture motivates and informs learning. When teachers use crosscultural content to teach students knowledge of the target culture, learners can get

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information about their own culture and the target language at the same time.

Another reason that target culture can be a good motivator in target language tutoring is because of cultural contact. When students contact a second culture, their emotions fluctuate (Levine & Adelman, 1982). Individual reactions may vary depending on students' personalities, previous experience with other cultures, and the emotional support available (Sigrid, 1983). There are three stages of cultural adjustment which include euphoria, culture shock, and adaptation (Levine & Adelman, 1982; Sigrid, 1983).

Euphoria is a honeymoon period in which students feel excited about contact with a new culture. This thrill is a good inspiration for teachers to attract students to learn a target language.

Culture shock may occur when students find themselves confused and alienated by a new culture. Although it is not clear if EFL students go through culture shock merely by being-exposed to another culture, some vision of this may be relevant. To overcome culture shock, teachers need to assist students to conquer the feelings of confusion, and support students as they try to comprehend the new culture.

The final stage of cultural contact, adaptation, occurs when students overcome the feeling of alienation. They will find value and significance in the differences and similarities between cultures and to create a full range of meaning in the situation.

Despite this, the differences between the target culture and native culture can stimulate students to learn a language. The more differences between the two cultures, the more stimulation is available. If this stimulation can be positively channeled into learning, the students may learn the language more easily (Chen, 2004).

The native culture can be a motivator in a foreign language class as well. Students are more familiar with the contents of their culture, so they can learn faster in the target language if content is included from the native culture. Moreover, Liao (2003) stated that native culture can give language learners a practical social environment to apply target language. Most foreign-language learners in Taiwan do not have a chance to go abroad, and they do not live in an English-speaking environment and culture. Hence if students learn about their own culture in the target language, they can have more opportunity to practice the language. In this view, language teaching and crosscultural teaching are mutually beneficial.

Crosscultural Teaching in the Classroom

The culture belonging to each student should be viewed as equal in any classroom. Gougeon (2000) defined culture in the following manner:

Culture is one's sense of familiarity with long-standing social conventions, religious behaviors, expectations, values, attitudes and beliefs, traditions, physical environment, and deeper-level, intuitive connections with the broader universe. (p. 3)

Every culture expresses the views of its members uniquely, so it can be said that students coming to class are all equal. There are no cultures that are superior or inferior to any other cultures (Straub, 1999). All cultures have their distinguishing features. It is not necessary to force learners or instructors to deny their native culture. Teachers and students should respect one another.

Students should feel at ease when they are together with their classmates who are from different cultures. Straub (1999) mentioned that students seem to feel anxious once they settle into a new class. This uneasy sensation will impede their learning. If students feel that they are alienated or are not respected by their classmates, they

will refuse to learn or even worse, deny themselves and their background. At this time, teachers should assist students to feel respected.

Accordingly, culture has to be integrated into language teaching from the very first day of language class (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000); not only the target culture, but also the learners' culture. A good way to respect cultures is to understand them deeply. When students are familiar with details, they begin to respect their classmates and feel at ease to learn. Thus, both target culture and students' traditions should be introduced.

The content of culture is very broad. Gebhard (2000) advised teachers to teach concepts that not only can bring about appreciation for people and culture but also can be useful for students when students are placed in intercultural communication situations. The most common topics are food, festivals, folk tales, and songs. These areas are closely related to people's lives and are the easiest aspects to compare and contrast between two cultures. Taking food as an example, most American and Taiwanese eat meat, like pork and chicken. However, Taiwanese seldom eat turkey nor do Americans eat internal organs of pork.

In addition, Chen (2004) mentioned that when training students' language skills, teachers should assist students to gain crosscultural awareness. Cultures have dissimilar communication styles. It is essential to assist students to realize the diversity between their native languages and the target language. One example is the style in which people write. Westerners write in a direct way. They introduce the gist of an article at the beginning. On the contrary, Chinese tend to write in indirect way. They like to summarize the gist at the end. Teachers must explain these differences in order for learners to write good compositions. Students will make better use of the target language once they have a clear awareness of what is required after comparing and contrasting two cultures.

There are various ways a teacher can integrate culture into a language class. Amornsitthi (1999) pointed out that enlightened culture teaching can help students both to understand and enjoy native speakers. Forcing students to memorize terms will only decrease their interest in learning language. Diverse teaching strategies are necessary. Various strategies were suggested by Abisamra (2004): inviting native speakers to lecture, watching audio-taped interviews or video-taped interviews, and using authentic readings and realia for crosscultural

understanding. Singing songs, playing drama, story-telling, playing games, and taking advantage of information technology are techniques often used by Taiwanese teachers as well. Through these activities, students can enjoy learning the contents of two cultures: their own, and that of the target language.

Conclusion

Crosscultural education should be part of a language class as a motivator. As Chen (1996) pointed out, to understand the people of a target language, one must understand their cultural background. Modern communication has promoted more frequent interaction among people around the world. When exchanging information with a foreigner, learners should have the ability to express their culture in the target language.

Furthermore, crosscultural teaching should be made the most important aspect of target-language courses. There are several reasons for this. First, students can get a deeper understanding of the foreign language because language and culture cannot be separated. Second, the difference of two cultures can inspire students to learn. Third, the familiar native culture is easier to teach than target culture because students already know much about the culture of their native language. Thus, the content

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can give students confidence and enhance their chance to practice target language in the class.

In conclusion, culture teaching is very important in a language class. People should not only understand the cultures around the world, but also be able to learn about their native culture and use it as a basis for learning the target culture and language.

Using Taiwanese Culture and Folktales to Teach English

Introduction

In the year 2002, Taiwan became a member of the World Trade Organization. Since then, Taiwan has been fully integrated into international economy and trade. As a result, Taiwan now has to face new challenges in dealing with international competition. The effects of globalization, the frequent intercultural interaction, and necessity for Taiwanese to travel to other countries around the world have made English more important than ever (Chuang, 2002). Moreover, about 85 percent of the world's print is written in English (Liu, 1996). If any Taiwanese wants to communicate with people from other countries in this global village, English ability is essential.

Moreover, language is inseparable from culture (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000; Pak, 1999; Seelye, 1984; Woo, 2000). Western culture is usually emphasized during English classes (Liu, 2002), and students are required to be good at acquiring Western culture in English. However, this is not enough.

Taiwanese culture should also be taught as a communication tool. Instead of knowing just the target culture, intercultural communication includes sharing one's own culture with others (Tsung, 2004). Teachers should instruct students in English using their local culture. If they are able to appreciate and discuss their local culture, students can exchange knowledge with foreigners successfully.

In addition, culture includes many facets. One of these aspects is folktales, which are especially good for language teaching (Taylor, 2000). Therefore, the object of this project is to strengthen the practice that in addition to teaching Western culture, Taiwanese culture, including Taiwanese folktales in particular, shall also be taught during English class in Taiwan. This topic is separated into several sections. Taiwanese history will be introduced first. Then, Taiwanese culture will be described. Current cultural teaching in English class in

Taiwan will also be noted. In addition, the concept of using Taiwanese culture to teach English will be discussed, especially the use of Taiwanese folktales.

Introducing the History of Taiwan

Taiwan, the Republic of China, is a country that lies in southeastern Asia. It consists of six islands: Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu, as well as the Pratas and Spratly islands. Taiwan has 400 years of written history (Hung, 1996). The history of Taiwan is divided into several periods, including rule by different countries: 1) Prehistoric Era, 2) European colonization, 3) Jhen, Cheng-Gong dominion, 4) Ching rule, 5) foundation of the Taiwan Republic, 6) Japanese settlement, and 7) the R.O.C. regulation (Government Information Office [GIO], 2003a; Taiwan's 400 Years of History, 1998). Each of these periods will be discussed in turn.

Prehistoric Era. This period is named as such because Taiwan's first inhabitants did not leave any written records of their origins. Anthropological evidence suggests that Taiwan's indigenous people are of Malayan-Polynesian descent (Shiue, 2003).

European Colonization. When Portuguese navigators first came upon Taiwan in the mid-16th century, they were impressed by the green mountains and blue-green sea. They

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gave Taiwan the name "Formosa," which means "beautiful island" (National Institute for Compilation and Translation [NICT], 1999a). After six weeks, the survivors of the original shipwreck left Taiwan. In 1622, the Dutch East India Company built a military base on Penghu Island, but was forced out by the residents and moved to the island of Taiwan in 1624. The Dutch ruled Taiwan for 38 years. In 1626, the Spanish occupied northern Taiwan, but were expelled by the Dutch in 1642. While the Dutch were colonizing Taiwan, China was experiencing civil war. The Manchus were in the process of changing the country from the Ming to Ching Dynasty. During this time, thousands of people fled the coastal provinces of Fujian and Guangdong to Taiwan.

Jheng, Cheng-Gong Dominion. Many Ming loyalists escaped to Taiwan including the famous Jheng, Cheng-Gong (GIO, 2003a). His father was an international trader and pirate who married a Japanese woman. Jheng ousted the Dutch in 1662. Together with his son and grandson, this family commanded Taiwan until 1683.

Ching's Rule. After 22 years of the dominion, Jheng's realm was eventually defeated by the Manchus. The Manchus ruled Taiwan for 212 years until 1895. Under Ching dynasty rule, scores of Chinese left the mainland to settle on

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this island. Because of its abundant resources of agricultural products, such as tea and camphor, several countries attempted to occupy Taiwan (GIO, 2003a). Japan occupied southern Taiwan for a short period in 1874, and the French dwelt in northern Taiwan in 1884 to 1885. Foreign interest in Taiwan made the Ching court realize the importance of this island, so Taiwan became Ching's 22nd province in 1885 (NICT, 1999a).

Foundation of the Taiwan Republic. With the fall of the Ching Dynasty to Japan, Taiwan was ceded in 1895 under the Treaty of Shimonoseki (NICT, 1999a). However, Taiwanese refused to be incorporated into Japan. On May 25th, 1895, the Taiwan Republic was established with the assistance of Manchu officials. Few days later, a Japanese military force landed in Northern Taiwan to crush the movement. On October 21, 1895, Japanese imperial troops entered the southern capital of the Taiwan Republic, ending its short life. About 14,000 Taiwanese people were killed (NICT, 1999a).

Japanese Settlement. Taiwan then fell under a 50-year rule by Japan. There were three periods in which Japanese used different ways to control Taiwan (GIO, 2003a). From 1895 to 1918, Japanese established administrative mechanisms and suppressed armed resistance by local Han

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people and aborigines. During the second period from 1918 to 1937, Japan strengthened its hold in Taiwan and transformed the island into a secure base from which Japan could launch its southward aggression. The last period was from 1937 to 1945. Japanese settlers carried out naturalization of Taiwan residents as Japanese.

The R.O.C. Regulation. When Japan was defeated in the Second World War, the Republic of China, which had overthrown Manchu rule, took over Taiwan in 1945. Unfortunately, bad management created much stress among the Taiwanese and the September 28 Incident broke out in 1947. A number of mainlanders were killed undeservedly (GIO, 2003a; NICT, 1999a). After mainland China fell to the Communists in 1949, the central government of the Republic of China retreated to Taiwan. These immigrants were called the Latest Immigrants (Chwang, 1995). In 1958, the Communists shelled the islands of Kinmen and Matsu attempting to usurp Taiwan, but eventually failed. After the Emergency Decree was lifted in 1987, Taiwan became a democratic country.

Taiwan, at different times, has been managed by many countries in 400 years. Through the 400 years, various cultures deeply influenced modern Taiwanese culture.

Defining the Culture of Taiwan

Taiwanese culture is a combination of many civilizations. It integrates aboriginal, Dutch, Spanish, Han, and Japanese with the Latest Immigrant culture, and finally modern Western culture (Hung, 1996). These cultures were mixed into Taiwanese culture little by little.

The first culture to emerge in Taiwan was aboriginal culture; the aborigines belonged to the Austronesian Language Family (Shiue, 2003). During the Dutch occupation 400 years ago, many indigenous people were forced to the hill country and became the "mountain barbarians" when mostly single Han men from China settled in Taiwan (NICT, 1999a). The way they dressed, the food they ate, and even the language they spoke were different from the Han people (who were mostly from Chinese coastal provinces of Fijian and Guangdong) but similar to modern-day Indonesians (NICT, 1999b). Other aborigines married with Han single men and became the Pin-Pu Tribes (lowland aborigines) (NICT, 1999a). Although it was not easy to distinguish their features from those of the Hans, their traditions, beliefs and matriarchal society still remained intact.

Today, the mountain people and Pin-Pu Tribes comprise less than two percent of the population in Taiwan (GIO,

2003b). They live in remote mountains, off-shore islands, or in the countryside, where their original cultures are still mostly retained (Shiue, 2003). In contrast, the Han people form the largest ethnic group in Taiwan, making up roughly 98 percent of the population (GIO, 2003b).

About 400 years ago, the Han people began to settle Taiwan from China. At the same time, they brought their culture--Fujianese and Hakka--to the island. The Han culture is slightly different from modern Chinese culture. Before the Han emigrants came to Taiwan, the Fujianese and Hakka culture had been integrated with the northern Chinese culture of the Han dynasty. Thus, the traditions belonging to ancient Central Plains can be found in Taiwanese culture (Chwang, 1995). For example, the Taiwanese printed character retains a complex form derived from the characters written in the ancient Central Plains, while the People's Republic of China uses simplified Chinese characters.

After the Han people came to the island, Han culture became mainstream Taiwanese culture. Nevertheless, the local Taiwanese culture was integrated into other tolerant cultures (NICT, 1999b). For instance, the Dutch preached Christianity. Also, the style of schools was changed from Chinese old-style private schools to Western educational

institutions when the Japanese governed Taiwan. Architectural style is another example. Many different kinds of buildings can be seen in Taiwan. When the Dutch and Spanish came to Formosa in the 17th century, they built Western buildings, such as churches, foreign firms, and castles. The Han people preferred wooden and brick houses, such as *san-ho-yuan* (a central building with two wings attached perpendicular to either side). They also built many temples, city gates, and gateways. During the Japanese occupation, many Hellenistic structures were erected. Influenced by the 20th-century American building styles, square apartments and business blocks are commonplace in big cities. It is in the Taiwanese character to easily absorb different kinds of cultures.

However, when the Latest Immigrants who came with Chiang Kai-Shek withdrew to Taiwan in 1949, local cultures, such as the aboriginal, Fujianese, and Hakka cultures, could not be taught at school, but only "Big Chinese culture" (Chwang, 1995). Mandarin was the only language that could be spoken. Students learned the literature, history, and geography that belonged to China before the Latest Immigrants came to Taiwan. For example, textbooks incorrectly wrote that the capital of R.O.C. was in Nan-Jing, instead of Taipei. In addition, articles were

all written about China around the late 19th century and early 20th centuries. The Big Chinese culture unwillingly became the major culture. Students were taught to ignore or even look down upon their local culture. Fortunately, after the Emergency Decree was lifted, the awareness of local cultures was emphasized again. Students learned the culture that belonged to Taiwan in class once more.

There is no culture that is superior to another, and every civilization should be respected. Teachers should notice that when they plan instruction.

Current Cultural Teaching in Primary English Classes in Taiwan

English is an important language in the world, even in eastern Asia. English has been taught in elementary schools in Japan, China, and Korea since before 2001. On the basis of this trend, English has been set as a formal subject in Taiwanese elementary schools since 2001. According to the Taiwanese Ministry of Education (TME) (1998), English is required for fifth and sixth grade students. One of the reasons that the TME (1998) declared the necessity of elementary English education is to cultivate students' view of the world through establishing their English communication ability, so they can introduce Taiwan to the world.

Taiwanese teachers have to make more effort to help students learn English because English is a foreign language in Taiwan. Kachru (1990) postulated that there are three kinds of English teaching circles in this world. First is the inner circle. Teachers teach bilinguals in the country where people view English as a mainstream language. For instance, immigrants learn English in Australia. The second is the outer circle; Singapore and India are examples. English is students' second language and people in the upper classes of society, such as in schools and government institutions, speak English regularly. Taiwan belongs to the last group, which is the expanding circle. Students are not exposed to English outside of class.

As a result, TME (1998) emphasized that teachers should construct a natural and joyful language-learning environment for children so they might attain three goals: to know major foreign holidays, to understand how to explain the celebrations of main Taiwanese holidays, and to understand basic social politeness. Therefore, cultural teaching in English class should be emphasized.

Still, cultural teaching does not play an important role in some English classes. According to a survey of Y. C. Hsieh (2002), 83 percent of teachers who teach in

elementary schools in Taichung (a city in central Taiwan) believe that the main purpose of teaching English is to train students to have the ability to communicate and to cultivate interest in learning English. Only about 31 percent of English teachers considered it important to improve students' knowledge of cultures. This contradicts the Nine-year Integrated Curriculum Guidelines, the basic goals of which are for students to learn English; not only training students to have English communication ability, but also improving students' cultural knowledge. Therefore, instead of training only communication ability, teachers should increase students' ability to understand English-language target cultures--that of the United States, Great Britain, or Australia.

Even if target cultures are taught in English class, the culture of Taiwan has generally been ignored. Cheng (2000) studied the current English teaching situation of elementary schools in Tainan (a city in southwestern Taiwan). She found that the majority of teachers only used foreign cultures as teaching material and overlooked the content of local culture that is closely linked to the children's lives. The same phenomenon is recorded by H. J. Hsieh (2002). She interviewed English teachers who teach at elementary schools in Taipei (the capital of Taiwan).

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These teachers also indicated that it is necessary for
students to know English and American cultures when
learning English language, but they did not talk about the
need for Taiwanese culture. Thus, local culture is absent
in English class.

Using Taiwanese Culture to Teach English

The content of Taiwanese culture has been disregarded
in the current English class in Taiwan (Cheng, 2000; H. J.
Hsieh, 2002; Y. C. Hsieh, 2002). English teachers strictly
emphasize Western cultures. As a result, many students are
proficient at expressing their view of Western culture,
but while interacting with foreigners, cannot represent
the local culture in which they were raised.

Mainland China also registers problems because of the
overemphasis on teaching Western culture. Tsung (2004)
found that students can speak with fervor and assurance
when talking about American culture. However, when it
comes to their Chinese culture, they become silent because
they have no idea how to express their culture in English.
All these students can do is continually receive other
cultures passively because foreigners cannot get
information about Chinese culture. Cultural interchange
should be mutual. Both of the sides have to understand
clearly their own culture, so they can reach the goal of

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sharing their information (Tsung, 2004). Unfortunately, Chinese culture cannot be spread to other countries if Chinese English speakers cannot discuss it. This will have a negative effect during international cultural interchange (Tsung, 2004).

It is true that English is one of the most widespread languages of the world. If Taiwanese want to spread their culture to the world, students must be taught to express their own culture and customs in English (TME, 2001). Chuang (2002) expressed her opinion about the importance of teaching children's own culture in English education:

> In EFL contexts, there is a need to acknowledge the value of including information about students' own culture. This emphasis on cultural context provides students with the opportunity to learn more about their own culture and to learn English to explain their own culture. (p. 105)

In view of this, English teaching material should include Taiwanese culture (Tsai, 2002). Y. C. Hsieh (2002) and Liao (2003) indicated that English teaching materials should emphasize recognition of the community surrounding the children, for instances, the traditional holiday celebrations and folktales of their hometown. Thus, students can explain their culture in English and

additionally, can learn English from their background knowledge; this may encourage the feeling that English is not just an additional subject-matter burden.

The basic topics of culture for elementary students are comprised of content such as holiday celebrations (the Yan-Shui fireworks display), games (spinning top), folk dances (lion dance), realia (Taiwanese glove puppetry), foods (Taiwanese oyster omelets), stories (folktales) and sample craft activities (aboriginal crafts) (Chuang, 2002). For beginning students, teachers should select materials that include basic aspects of culture but is not limited to them. Artistic forms such as music, dance, and graphic arts can be selected. No matter what materials teachers choose, teachers have to consider students' interest, needs, and sense of meaning (Chuang, 2002). Therefore, students will be more eager to introduce their own culture in English (Huang, 2002).

Taiwanese culture is not taught in most English classes. However, in many theses, Taiwanese experts have reported the importance of children's native culture in language teaching. Therefore, lessons about its culture should be used generally in teaching English.

Using Taiwanese Folktales to Teach English

Taiwanese folktales are a good choice for English teaching in Taiwan because folktales can help young learners connect both to their native culture and to other cultures (Rebecca, 2000). As Taylor (2000) noted, the cultural elements help learners to develop cultural awareness. He also indicated the importance of folktales in language teaching. Folktales are excellent for listening, speaking, reading, and writing because of their frequent repetitions. Moreover, many folktales have natural rhythmic qualities that are useful in practicing pronunciation. Because folktales began as oral stories and are often published as children's books with easy language, they are easier to understand than other types of literature. Besides, folktales are especially useful for developing cognitive and academic skills. They also fit well with content-based instruction and with values education. Teachers can require students to compare, contrast, and evaluate.

Taylor (2000) provided a definition of folktales. "A folktale is a traditional story that has been passed on by words of mouth told from parents to children over many generations or passed by countless storytellers sitting around countless evening fires" (p. 4). No one knows who

the original author of a folktale was, and there are
usually different versions of the same story.

Although a lot of variation exists in different
folktales, they usually feature seven typical
characteristics (Taylor, 2000). First, folktales of all
cultures tell about events in time order. Second,
repetition and redundancy are broadly used. Third, the
stories are predictable. Fourth, grammar is simple, such
as simple past and present tenses. Fifth, vocabulary and
ideas are concrete. Sixth, illustrations provide support
and context for the text. Lastly, the relationship of
storytellers to audience is much more of a peer
relationship. Students are encouraged to question whether
they agree with the author's perspective.

Rebecca (2000) listed a sequence that teachers can
follow when teaching folktales. Teachers can begin with a
teacher-led book-introduction activity. During this time,
the teacher can provide students with background knowledge
about the story. Then the teacher reads to the students.
While reading the book, the teacher can model effective
reading skills and expose the illustrations of the book.
During after-reading discussion, the teacher can lead
students to have a conversational response to the story.
The conversation should be designed by teachers to model

provocative, open-ended questions and help children learn to ask their own critical questions about content they read.

Folktales are one of the most useful sources for young kids to learn a language. English teachers should make more use of them.

Conclusion

Educational globalization is a phenomenon in which different cultures interchange, integrate and/or assimilate with one other (Liu, 2002). Under competitive circumstances, every country tries its best to preserve and enhance its traditional culture. Taiwan is no exception. For the last four hundred years, Taiwan has experienced governance by Dutch, Spanish, Manchu, Japanese, and the Republic of China. Each of these cultures affected the culture of Taiwan. Aborigines, Han people, and the Latest Immigrants each brought unique elements of culture to the island. Moreover, because of strong Western influence in recent years, the culture of Taiwan now combines aboriginal, Dutch, Spanish, Han, Japanese, the Latest Immigrant, and modern Western cultures (Hung, 1996).

Although Western and American culture has impacted the mainstream culture in recent years, Taiwan still has a

distinctness that no other culture can replicate. Despite

this, Taiwanese culture does not play an important role in

current English classes. Teachers place too much

importance on American and Western cultures. Indeed,

English culture needs to be taught when teaching English.

The fact is that local and foreign cultures are both

important in the teaching objectives of the Nine-year

Integrated Curriculum Guidelines (Cheng, 2000). Neither of

the cultures can be omitted during English class.

English teachers need to be aware of the necessity of

adding Taiwanese culture and folktales in their classes.

Considering students' interests, needs, and sense of

meaning, teachers can introduce the culture of Taiwan

through the topic of holiday celebrations, food, games,

folktales, etc. Students then are able to introduce their

own culture to the world. Students are taught not only to

have a global view, but also have a sense of national

pride.

<center>Aural Comprehension Using Choral
Reading and Songs</center>

<u>Introduction</u>

In Taiwan, listening comprehension was seldom taught

in English classes in the past. The target of learning

English was to pass the entrance examinations, which only

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tested the ability to read and write. As a result, most of
the Taiwanese students who learned English beginning in
junior high school lacked listening comprehension, even
after more than six years of study. However, the Taiwanese
Ministry of Education has emphasized the importance of
aural comprehension. Teachers have been requested to spend
more time on training children's listening ability.

The purpose of this project is to provide some
studies that teachers can use to improve the aural
comprehension of young students. First, the importance of
aural comprehension in language is discussed. Then, aural
comprehension instruction is reviewed. The use of choral
reading and songs to improve aural comprehension is
described. Lastly, the assessment of aural comprehension
is discussed.

The Importance of Aural Comprehension

Language is designed for humans to communicate. Lyons
(1981) explained language as a system of symbols designed
in order to communicate. In order to have successful
communication, recipients must receive the message
accurately. This kind of ability is not inborn. Babies
develop aural comprehension from interacting with their
guardians. Before little children begin to talk, they have
plenty of chances to hear a language. It is natural that

listening is the first language skill to be learned (Tsai, 2002).

Listening training is also essential to second-language (L2) learners. Learners are not as sensitive as native speakers to distinct phonemes of L2 (Politzer, 1965). L2 learners do not have as many chances as native speakers to develop aural comprehension. Instructors have to give them well-structured training in aural comprehension.

Moreover, according to Morley (1999), more than fifty percent of a language is comprised of listening (see Figure 1). People listen twice as much as they speak, four times as much as they read, and five times as much as they write. Listening is used more than any skill in daily life. Hence, listening should be the focus in language classes.
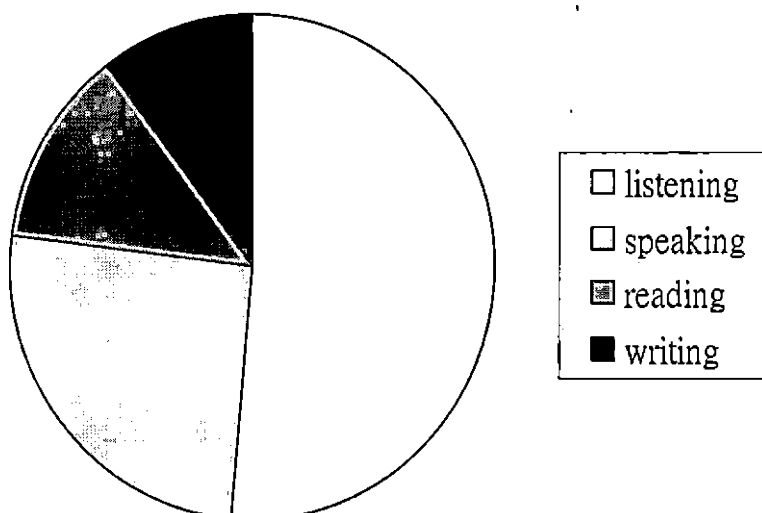
Source: adapted from Morley (1999)

Figure 1. The Ratio of Four Language Skills

However, explicit teaching of listening is often

short-changed in language teaching (Morley, 1999). When

people have conversations, receivers often seem passive.

As a result, the ability to listen is often taken for

granted. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,

the grammar-translation method, which focuses on reading

and writing, had been broadly used in English as a foreign

language instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 1999). No

systematic attention was given to aural comprehension.

Even for the reformers advocating the direct method and

audio-lingual instruction, listening comprehension was

taken for granted in the imitation and repetition of

patterns and dialogues (Morley, 1999).

Fortunately, the need for aural comprehension as a skill was gradually recognized in the last quarter of the twentieth century (Morley, 1999). The importance of well-structured training in aural comprehension is pivotal in second language learning:

> Proficiency in listening comprehension makes a central contribution to the learner's whole development of ability in foreign language learning. (Morley, 1999, p. 16)

Aural comprehension plays an important role in language learning. Instructors shall take time directing students to improve their aural comprehension.

Aural Comprehension Instruction

Teachers should guide students not only to learn a language, but also to acquire self-help strategies for learning language (Morley, 1999). There are three forms of communication. Listening in these forms is a highly active, not passive, experience. The first form is a one-way or uni-directional communication in which learners receive input form their surrounding. The input may come from media (films, movies, radios), public performances (musical shows, lectures, debates), or instructional situations of all kinds (EFL classes, net meetings), including conversations overheard. The second form is

two-way communication, in which learners play reciprocal roles as both listener and speaker. This may happen in their classes or outside activities. The last form is self-dialogue communication. Learners are encouraged to self-dialogue and to attend to their own internal second-language production as they make decisions and/or plans.

Morley (1999) indicated that aural comprehension activities have three important variants: exposure time, instructional time, and listening stretch time. Exposure time is the total amount of time that the target language is heard. It belongs to the category of general curriculum. Students during exposure time have a chance to hear English on campus, on the radio, or from a TV program. Instructional time, which is a part of the listening-special curriculum, is the amount of time that students are offered listening-oriented activities. Analysis is made at beginning, medium, and advanced levels that provide information on the uses of listening, both in the school context and after graduation. Listening stretch time is a program that explores the concept of listening throughout the school day. Examples include choral reading and songs. This listening focus uses auditory activities to complement daily classroom activities.

Whichever type of activities an instructor uses should be based on the learners' motivation in learning a language. Chen (2003) investigated the listening performance of some senior-high-school students. She found out that students with higher motivation can get higher scores on English listening comprehension than students with low motivation. The main reason is that highly motivated students spend more time practicing English listening comprehension than do lower motivated students. Accordingly, Chen (2003) recommended that English teachers recognize the learning motivation of their students and give them instruction based on their motivation. Once students are willing to learn voluntarily, their aural comprehension may improve twice as fast with half the effort.

There are many ways to improving children's aural comprehension. Instructors should seek ways that can motivate students to learn better.

Using Choral Reading to Teach Aural Comprehension

Choral reading is defined as the oral reading of poetry that makes use of various voice combinations and contrasts to represent the deep meaning or to highlight the tonal qualities of a reading passage (McCauley & McCauley, 1992; Yoneoka, 2004). It is both a performing

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art and a creative and lively classroom activity used to teaching poetry (Stassen, 1969). The voice can be high and low, loud and soft, fast and slow, or long and short (McCauley & McCauley, 1992). The model may be a teacher or higher-level students in a class. During reading, physical movement can be added to help children feel the texts. Yet there is no singing required or musical back-up, just a rhythmic recitation of words (Cullen, 1968). Yoneoka (2004) indicated that learners who have a high degree of ability in choral reading achieve not only a higher oral reading speed, but a higher degree of aural comprehension as well.

McCauley and McCauley (1992) listed three characteristics of choral reading that are important for aural comprehension in language learning. First, choral reading supplies a low-anxiety environment. It is a reading activity that has no worksheets, no correction, no testing, and no grades. Children can feel free to take risks, to try out their new language, and to make errors. Second, the repeated practice can help students to become more familiar with the words and content of the poetry, and then concentrate on other parts, such as grasping the rhythm, pitch, volume, and tone of English. Third, demonstrations, gestures, facial expression, and

paralinguistic clues that are used in choral reading can help make the input comprehensible.

Many characteristics of poetry for choral reading fit in with the theory of language acquisition (McCauley & McCauley, 1992). Repeated syntax and cumulative structures make it easy for students to recite. There are some key points in selecting an appropriate poem for choral reading (Cullen, 1968; McCauley & McCauley, 1992). Poems that are short, simple, and have strong rhythm can be helpful to students. Poems that are humorous and/or familiar to students' life can be stimulating. In addition, poems where content relates to academic subjects can be a supplement. Poems in which actions and even added lines can be inserted are helpful in clarifying vocabulary and emphasizing the meaning. The teacher should keep in mind that the choice depends on the learners, their level of English proficiency, and their willingness to speak English.

Various poems that are suggested by McCauley and McCauley (1992) which work well for teaching ESL children choral reading are "I Am Running in A Circle" and "Dainty Dottie Dee" by Jack Prelutsky, "Adventures of Isabel" by Ogden Nash, "Captain Hook," "Boa Constrictor," and "For Sale" from Shel Silverstein's book *Where the Sidewalk*

Ends, and "Learning," "Mother Doesn't Want a Dog," "Wicked

Thoughts," and "Since Hanna Moved Away" from Judith

Viorst's book *If I Were in Charge of the World*.

McCauley and McCauley (1992) suggested after

selecting a poem, there be a procedure for presenting it

to a class. Initially, the teacher briefly introduces the

topic of the poem as a warm-up. After that, the instructor

reads the poem aloud with full expressions and sound

effects. Next, students receive copies of the poem. The

instructor slowly reads the poem again while children

follow the text with their eyes. Students then read with

the instructor little by little for the first time and

gradually increase their speed, finally adding movement

and sound effects. The teacher cannot assign lines until

children feel comfortable with the content. If no one is

ready to read alone, the teacher does not force any

student. Pupils are allowed to read a line as a pair or

group. Children practice the poem with assigned parts. At

the end, the instructor applauds the children for their

job well done.

Poems are often read in choral-reading activities.

Students continuously hearing English can familiarize

themselves with the tone of English (McCauley & McCauley,

1992). Not only do students express literacy with their

voices, but with their faces, their bodies, and with their entire spirit. They will eventually be more sensitive to the sound of English.

Using Songs to Teach Aural Comprehension

L2 students can be exposed to meaningful sounds and words through a song, which is a short piece of music with words (Cullen, 1998). The internal structures of music are rhythm, melody, and thematic development. It can be said that music has a language of its own. The rhythm of songs has a great influence on motivating students in English learning and adding to students' long-term memory (Koike, 1999; Park, 2000). Sensitivity to rhythm is a basic and essential first step in training aural comprehension (Griffee, 1992). Its repetitive rhythmical pattern reinforces L2 students' learning experience. Thus, if teachers use songs in their language classes, students are exposed to the rhythms of songs and English at the same time.

Furthermore, songs may be used in children's early language acquisition (Murphey, 1990a). One reason is that songs are non-threatening (Griffee, 1992). The interesting kinesthetic action accompanying songs can assist young learners in comprehending lyrics (Murphey, 1990a). Because songs provide a relaxing and enjoyable classroom

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atmosphere, it is easier and faster for students to hear the sounds and remember the lyrics (Griffee, 1992; Park, 2000). In addition, songs can speak right to students' hearts (Griffee, 1992; Koike, 1999; Park, 2000). Music can convey emotions by imitating the human voice and movement. Learners can easily associate themselves with the experience of music.

Students are naturally curious about various cultures (Melpignano, 1980). Children often compare and contrast their native tunes and lyrics with English songs. To improve aural comprehension in the study of language, teachers should select appropriate songs that stimulate positive associations (TME, 2001).

Considerations can be made when teachers choose songs (Murphey, 1990a). It is easier to teach a song full of repetition of words, phrases, lines, or chorus. Teachers need to pick a song that has a strong rhythmical pattern, useful language structures and vocabulary, and basic tunes that are easily learned by students. Songs are good for training aural comprehension if they can also reflect aspects of culture that are useful for students. Griffee (1992) suggested teachers should consider many factors before using a song in the classroom. He defines a good song for language class as a song that both instructor and

student like, that fits the lesson, and of which the instructor has a copy. In addition, other factors to consider include language level, musical interests, age of students, age and musical interests of the teacher, time required for a song, feedback and support available in the classroom, and the overall purpose in using a particular song.

There are some kinds of songs particularly chosen by language teachers (Murphey, 1990a). For entry-level students, teachers select made-for-EFL songs because the teachers can strictly control input. For advanced students, traditional and folk songs are good teaching materials. For non-specific-level students, teachers often choose contemporary songs and student-selected material. This is a popular choice since students will listen to these songs after class and it encourages a degree of self-directed learning.

Murphey (1990b) especially recommended a list of top-fifty, most-popular songs in English for teachers who teach English to speakers of other languages. This list is from the September 12, 1987 edition of Music & Media's Hot 100 Chart. The songs from this list are worthy because they offer short, effective, simple, native texts with dialogue and engaging song quality. These songs will

repeat over and over in a student's head creating a "song-stuck-in-my-head" phenomenon.

There are many chances to use songs in a teaching curriculum (Griffe, 1992). Teachers should have a high level of freedom to integrate songs to the curriculum as a means to practice pattern retention. If not, they can use music after the regular lesson is over. Songs can also be used for special occasions such as Christmas or when the textbook has no unit on a subject.

Aural Comprehension Assessment

Aural comprehension means "understanding authentic discourse in listening context and responding interactively" (Ling, 2003, p. 2). Because listening is one of the language skills, it can by no means be evaluated apart from all the other skills. There are some ways to evaluate listening comprehension: open-ended questions, multiple-choice, summary cloze, repetition, etc. Among these, multiple-choice is the most common method because it is easy for the examiner to check answers. However, Goulden (1999) indicated that "it would be more reasonable if listening tests involve speaking instead of reading skill, for listening is more closely related to listening than reading as far as their nature is concerned" (p. 3). When taking multiple-choice

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questions, students need to read written choices. Thus, reading ability is also included. In other words, a multiple-choice examination tests both listening and reading skills.

Ling (2003) suggested teachers use repetition as a measuring tool of aural comprehension. Students repeat immediately after listening to aural texts; hence, other skills are not required. In taking a listening task, the listener has to pay attention to the input. "The input will remain in his/her memory, and it is possible to listen, introspect, and reproduce what he/she hears" (Ling, 2003, p. 4). Furthermore, there are other methods that test only students' listening skills, such as oral report, rephrasing, and retelling. Nevertheless, "they might be appropriate for first language learners but impractical for EFL learners, whose oral ability greatly fall behind their general English proficiency" (Ling, 2003, p. 3). For this reason, the repetition task is a good method of testing aural comprehension.

Conclusion

The primary medium of human language is sound (Lyons, 1981). Choral reading and songs are available activities that can be used in teaching elementary-level L2 students (McCauley & McCauley, 1992). Choral reading is a positive,

enjoyable, and highly successful activity for acquiring language. Songs are not just useful teaching resources for motivation and enjoyment, but also great for language-learning skills and cultural study (Murphey, 1990a). When combined, choral reading and songs are effective aural comprehension tools. To sum up, teachers can make best use of choral reading and songs to motivate students to improve their aural comprehension and use the repetition method to test their improvement.

CHAPTER THREE
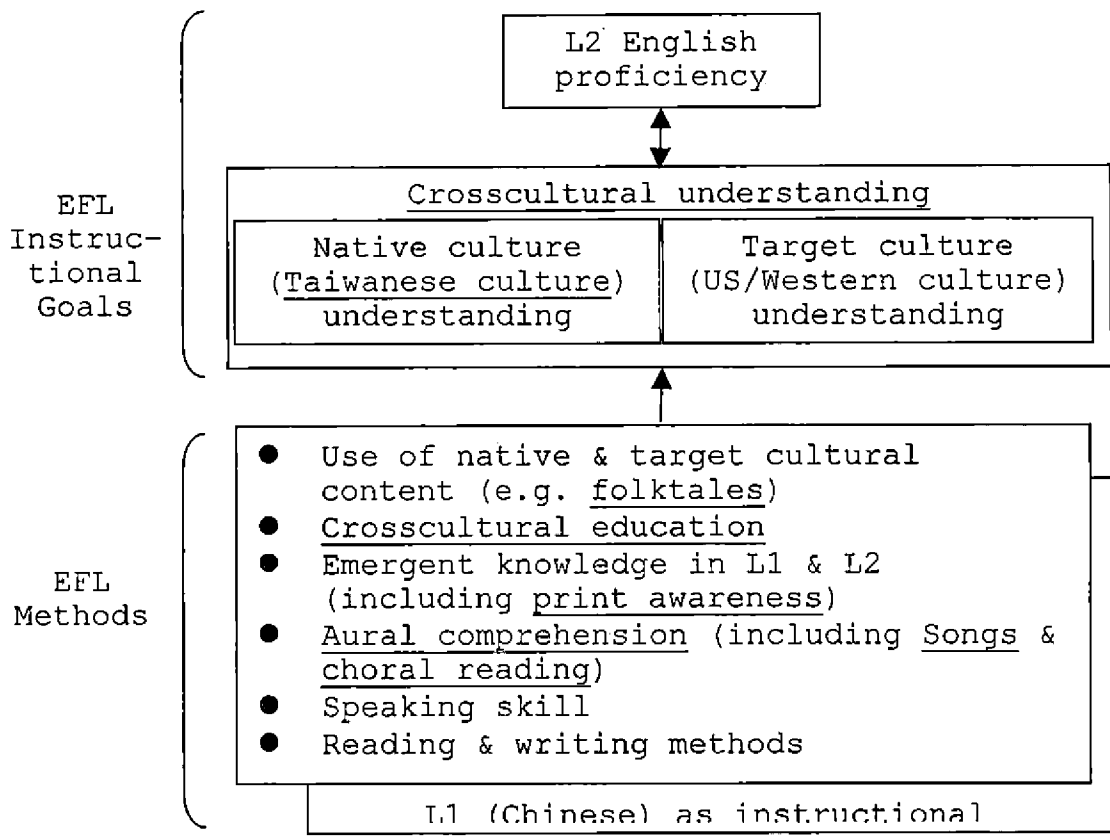
PURPOSE OF THE MODEL

Introduction

The literature review in Chapter Two presented research on different methods that can contribute to improving English proficiency and cultural understanding. It also discussed the definition and function of four key concepts: Awareness of print for children of ideographic languages, crosscultural education as a motivator, using Taiwanese cultures and folktales to teach English, and aural comprehension using choral reading and songs. This chapter provides a model that combines these four key concepts and depicts how the four key words interact with one another in the model.

The four key concepts discussed in the previous chapter play an important role in the model (see Figure 2). First, the understanding of Taiwanese culture and crosscultural issues acts as a goal for Taiwanese elementary English education. Second, songs, choral reading, and crosscultural education are all EFL methods that teachers can use to assist students to reach their goals. Third, folktales are examples that can be used for native and target cultural content. Fourth, print

awareness is included as part of emergent literacy, which is one of the EFL methods. Thus, each key concept has its purpose and function in the model.

Proposed Theoretical Framework

Figure 2 explains the relationships between the EFL instructional goals methods for Taiwanese elementary English Education (see Figure 2).

```
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │   L2 English    │
                    │   proficiency   │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             ↕
    ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
    │         Crosscultural understanding                   │
EFL │    ┌──────────────────────┬──────────────────────┐    │
Instruc- │ │   Native culture     │   Target culture     │    │
tional   │ │ (Taiwanese culture)  │ (US/Western culture) │    │
Goals    │ │   understanding      │   understanding      │    │
    │    └──────────────────────┴──────────────────────┘    │
    └───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                             ↑
    ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
    │  ● Use of native & target cultural                    │
    │    content (e.g. folktales)                           │
    │  ● Crosscultural education                           │
EFL │  ● Emergent knowledge in L1 & L2                      │
Methods │    (including print awareness)                     │
    │  ● Aural comprehension (including Songs &             │
    │    choral reading)                                    │
    │  ● Speaking skill                                    │
    │  ● Reading & writing methods                         │
    └───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                L1 (Chinese) as instructional
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Key: Terms underlined are included in the Review of Literature

Figure 2. English Proficiency and Cultural Understanding as Instructional Goals Using EFL Methods for Taiwanese Elementary English Education

Teachers can use this model as a reference guideline to design a curriculum. Details of the framework are explained in the following paragraphs.

English-as-a-Foreign Language Instructional Goals

The chief goal of learning English in Taiwanese elementary school is to reach L2 (English) proficiency. The goal of the Taiwanese Ministry of Education (TME)

(2001) for Taiwanese elementary English education is to develop children's basic English oral communication ability. Children should recognize and produce at least 200 productive vocabulary words, so they can converse with other people. Moreover, children need to understand greetings, acknowledgements, and apologies, so they can respond to people appropriately.

As children become proficient in L2, students are involved in crosscultural topics which include native (Taiwanese) culture and target (US/Western) culture. According to the target abilities announced by TME (2001), students have to recognize major holidays of Western cultures, to practice introducing Taiwanese main holidays in English, and to know some basic international etiquette and protocol.

Although English language proficiency is the ultimate goal in learning English and crosscultural understanding is both a means and another goal of learning English, they can complement each other. Students who increase their knowledge of crosscultural content can improve their L2 proficiency; students who are more proficient in L2 may enlarge their crosscultural understanding. As the basic ideal of English education stipulated by TME (2001), children can get in touch with different cultures through

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language learning. When children become acquainted with crosscultural topics, they will respect other cultures and be more willing to improve their L2 proficiency in order to have contact with people from all around the world.

English-as-a-Foreign Language Methods

In order to achieve these instructional goals, teachers can use EFL methods and take advantage of L1 as an instructional support. There are many methods that teachers can adopt. First, the use of native and target cultural content which focuses on folktales are EFL method that can assist students to reach the instructional goals. Teachers can use Taiwanese and Western folktales to help students develop cultural awareness and also to develop language skills.

A second method, crosscultural education, takes place when the text involves more than two countries or cultures. It can be a motivator to stimulate students to learn English at the same time. Moreover, comparison is a good way to teach culture (Nelson, 1999). Students can be clearer about the similarities and differences between two cultures.

As a third method, an EFL instructor should teach students on the basis of their emergent literacy in L1 and L2. This includes print awareness. Because many students

have attended "cram" school before grade-level EFL instruction, they already have some essential skills and understandings of literacy. When they enter the English class, a teacher does not need to waste time teaching English from the very beginning level.

A fourth method, teaching songs and choral reading, has a strong connection with cultural understanding and listening and speaking ability. This instruction is often used in EFL classrooms. Students are required to understand the content of basic songs and to follow simple rhythms when training listening ability. According to the TME (2001) mandates, it is essential for students to sing some songs and perform choral readings when training their speaking ability (TME, 2001).

Finally, methods are required to enhance the teaching of four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, to develop students' L2 abilities. The TME (2001) suggested instructors who teach in elementary school may mainly focus on listening and speaking. Reading and writing are auxiliary. Through teachers' providing plentiful opportunities for students to practice listening and speaking, students gradually improve their L2 proficiency.

In addition, use of L1 is one of the EFL methods because beginners and their teacher will both feel frustrated if the teacher insists on interaction exclusively in English with limited exposure of English at school (Lin, 2002). Consequently, teachers can utilize children's first language as a resource to facilitate the progress of English learning.

This chapter presents a framework for Taiwanese elementary English education. The framework has three EFL methods that an instructor can adopt to assist L2 learners to reach the EFL instructional goals.

CHAPTER FOUR

CURRICULUM DESIGN

Introduction

The curriculum based on the research in Chapter Two
and the framework in Chapter Three is designed for second
or third-grade Taiwanese students in elementary school.
The goal of this unit plan is for EFL students to be
proficient in English mainly through listening and
speaking, and then reading, writing, and singing. There
are six lessons in this curriculum. All the content is
related to children's culture and their experience of life.
Consequently, the teaching material can bring their prior
knowledge to the class.

Sequence of the Unit Plan

The length of each lesson is forty minutes. The level
is planned for students of intermediate fluency. All the
lessons provide objectives, procedures, and assessment.
Each lesson has three objectives: the content objective,
the learning objective, and the language objective. In the
content objective, students will be able to understand the
subject matter of this lesson; in the learning objective,
students learn a learning skill, so they can use this
skill to learn by themselves after this class; and in the

language objective, students increase their language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, or writing.

Moreover, every lesson plan features focus sheets, work sheets, check sheets, or assessment sheets if required. The focus sheets, including the text or illustrations of stories, are shown to students or are used as a supplement for an instructor. The work sheets are used for language output, content comprehension, and authentic language activities (Kitamura, 2001). Students finish those work sheets during the class with their partners. Check sheets develop students' self-check ability. Assessment sheets are used to evaluate what students have learned at the end of the lesson.

Content of the Unit Plan

The content of the six lessons is based on the principles of Chapters Two and Three. The EFL methods used in this unit include print awareness, crosscultural education, Taiwanese cultures, folktales, and listening skill (see Table 2).

Because the lessons are designed for second and third grade children, the teaching materials used as content in this unit focus on folktales, a song, and a poem that can interest children. In Lesson One, students will listen to

two Taiwanese folktales, "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain," and answer the comprehension questions about the two stories as a language objective. For the content objective, students will be able to define the meaning of a folktale. For the learning objective, students will be able to recognize certain details about the stories. This lesson uses four key concepts because during the activities of this lesson, students will increase their knowledge about a folktale and Taiwanese culture through listening to two stories.

Table 2. Interrelationship between Key Concepts and Lesson Plans

	Lesson One	Lesson Two	Lesson Three	Lesson Four	Lesson Five	Lesson Six
Print Awareness		✓		✓	✓	✓
Crosscultural Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Taiwanese Culture	✓		✓	✓		✓
Folktales	✓		✓	✓		✓
Listening	✓	✓	✓		✓	

In Lesson Two, students learn a song, "Hot Cross Buns," which is adapted from a street vender chant. In the learning objective, students learn to identify the key point of the song. For the content objective, students learn the concept of vender songs or chants. For the

language objective, students will be able to sing the song. Students improve their print awareness by following the instructor to read the lyrics of a song, stimulate their aural comprehension by listening to songs, and increase their cultural knowledge from learning a Western street-vender song.

In Lesson Three, students will be able to describe the growth of a turnip, to identify the main idea of Taiwanese folktale "The Big Turnip," and to write an alternative ending for the story. The activities include learning about the growth of a turnip, listening to a Taiwanese story, and writing an additional ending. Hence, the key concept of this lesson involves crosscultural education, Taiwanese culture, a folktale, and listening skill.

During Lesson Four, students predict the outcome of the story "The Grandaunt Tiger," which is a popular Taiwanese folktale, from its illustrations; they read the story, distinguish between fact and opinion statements, and write their opinion of the story. Thus, this lesson consists of awareness of print, crosscultural education, and Taiwanese folktales.

In Lesson Five, students choral-read the poem "Night Fun," by book "If I Were in Charge of the World and Other

Worries," written by Viorst (1981). The key concepts include awareness of print, crosscultural education, and listening skill because students will be able to identify the setting of the poem, model the poem, and perform the poem during this class.

In Lesson Six, the comparison between Taiwanese culture and Western culture involves awareness of print, crosscultural education, and use of Taiwanese folktales. Students identify Taiwanese cultural elements from reading or listening to a story "The Baby Water Buffalo." The story is adapted from an ancient Taiwanese folktale. Students identify Western cultural elements from reading or listening to the story "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey," which is a Western story adapted from the book Using Folktales (Taylor, 2000). Then students will be able to compare and contrast the two stories by using a Venn diagram. Last, students will be able to verbalize similarity and difference between the two stories using complete sentences.

Summary

This chapter has expounded the goal of the curriculum design, the sequence of the unit, and the content of the

six lessons. In the next chapter, the assessment of the
unit will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNIT ASSESSMENT PLAN

Introduction

Assessment is a process for evaluating teacher

observation or paper-and-pencil tests students' learning.

Types of assessment are varied, such as which are popular

types of assessment. Because this project is designed for

EFL second and third grade Taiwanese students, each

assessment is simple and short. This chapter includes the

description of the assessment used in six lesson plans as

the conclusion of this project.

Types of Assessment in the Instructional Unit

There are three formative assessments and one

summative assessment in each lesson plan. The formative

assessment is to evaluate the performance of students in

each task. For example, a teacher may ask six to eight

students comprehension questions after they listen to a

story. Thus, the teacher can judge how students generally

understand the story. If these students cannot answer the

questions correctly, the teacher can go back to the task

chain and strengthen students' weaknesses. If students can

answer the questions appropriately, the teacher can keep

going to the next task chain. The summative assessment is

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to test overall understanding of the lesson content. It is placed at the end of the lesson. For instance, in Lesson Two, students learn to sing a song, "Hot Cross Buns." Students are expected to sing the song fluently after this class. If students cannot pass this assessment, the teacher should go back to each task chain to find out the problem and assist students to reach the goal.

In Lessons One and Four, the formative assessment emphasizes testing students' understanding through speaking. Students answer the questions asked by a teacher. During summative assessment, students answer some multiple-choice questions on the assessment sheet. In this way, when the instructor corrects a student's answer, the assessment can measure how much this student has learned.

In Lessons Two and Five, a teacher judges the aural comprehension of students through singing a song and choral reading. The type of formative assessment is varied. The teacher judges students' listening comprehension by the times their hand is raised when they hear the key word, by their telling the answers, or by their singing a song and reading a poem with various tones. The summative assessment requires students to sing the song and choral reading fluently.

In Lesson Three, the teacher can assess students'
performance through asking questions and correcting their
work sheet during formative assessment. In summative
assessment, a check sheet can be used by the teacher to
evaluate how students perform and the level to which
students understand the content of other classmates'
presentations.

In Lesson Six, the teacher assesses students through
asking questions and evaluating work sheets they have
written with partners during formative assessment. During
summative assessment, students' listening comprehension is
measured by the extent to which they can order pictures of
the stories.

After assessment, a teacher can know how much
students have learned and adjust the teaching styles or
procedures according to the result of the assessment.
Gradually, students can reach all of the objectives.

Conclusion

This project has included various information. In
Chapter One, the background of the Taiwanese educational
environment, the purpose of the project, the context of
the project, and the significance of the project were
presented. Chapter Two, a review of relevant literature,

discussed four key concepts: awareness of alphabetic print for children whose language is ideographic, crosscultural education as a motivator, use of Taiwanese culture and folktales to teach English, and aural comprehension using choral reading and songs. In Chapter Three, key concepts are combined into a theoretical mode, a framework that shows the relationship between the goals of this project and EFL methods. In Chapter Four, the curriculum design, the sequence and content of the unit plan are included. Chapter Five consists of the description of assessment for the unit plan and concludes this project. The Appendix presents a unit plan which has six lesson components.

It is hoped that this project gives EFL teachers some insight about the crosscultural teaching and ways that Taiwanese cultural content can be emphasized in EFL elementary education to enhance students' proficiency in English.

APPENDIX

UNIT PLAN

LIST OF LESSONS

Introducing a Folktale

Level: 2nd & 3rd grade: Intermediate fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:

Language Objective   1. To listen to the stories "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain" and answer comprehension questions about the two stories

Content Objective   2. To define the meaning of a folktale

Learning Objective   3. To recognize certain details about the two stories "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain" in order to answer specific questions

Warm-up: The teacher tells students that they will hear some stories that have happened in Taiwan. Students share any Taiwanese story that they have heard before.

Task Chain 1: *Listening to the stories "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain"*
1. The teacher hands out Focus Sheets 1-1 and 1-2 (illustrations).
2. The teacher introduces the backgrounds of the two stories. (The Magical Rice Cave happened in Keelung; Ban Pin Mountain happened in Kaohsiung)
3. Before telling the stories, the teacher reminds students to pay attention to the behavior of the characters. The teacher tells stories on Focus Sheet 1-3 and 1-4 (the stories themselves).
4. After telling each story, the teacher asks students some specific comprehension questions about the story, such as "Who was the main character?" "What did the man do?" "What did the old man sell?" "Why did people buy three dumplings?"

Task Chain 2: *Defining a "folktale"*
1. The teacher tells students that the two stories are folktales and gives a

definition of a folktale which is a traditional story that has been passed on by word of mouth.

2. The teacher lists some common traits of a folktale on the board which are predictable, time-ordered, and having repetition) and then explains what they mean.

Task Chain 3: *Recognizing certain details about the two stories "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain"*

1. The teacher asks students to find out which elements of a folktale are represented in the two stories by asking "Could you have guessed what the story would be about from considering the beginning paragraph?" (predictable events) "Did the story happen one after another?" (time-ordered events) "Which sentence pattern repeated again and again?" (repetitious test)

2. Students are required to answer the question: What are the common traits of the two folktales "The Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain"?

Materials: Focus Sheets 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, and 1-4; Assessment Sheet 1-5

Formative Assessment:
Task Chain 1: Eight students can answer the comprehension questions correctly.
Task Chain 2: Three students can define the meaning of a folktale.
Task Chain 3: Six students can tell the common traits of the two stories.
Summative Assessment:
Using Assessment 1-5, students will be able to answer the questions correctly (100 points).

90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

Focus Sheet 1-1
Illustrations of the Story "The Magical Rice Cave"

1

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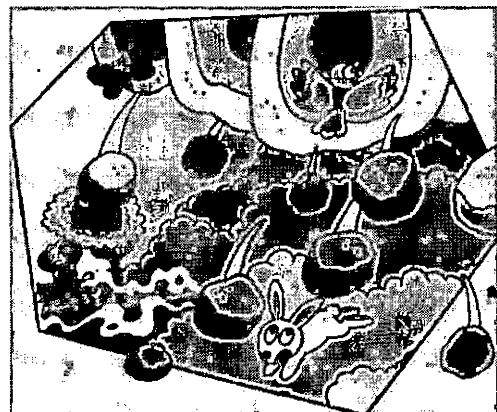
Source: Hua Yi Press Inc(1992).

Focus Sheet 1-2
Illustrations of the Story "Ban Pin Mountain"

1
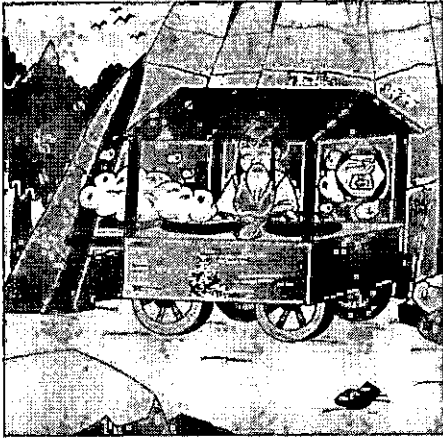
2

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Source: Xie (2002a).

Content of the Story "The Magical Rice Pot"

Once upon a time, there was a monk who lived in a small temple. He was a nice person. He shared his rice with poor people day after day.

One day, he only had a little rice left. He did not know what to do. Soon, an old man came. The man asked for rice, too. However, he was so hungry that he ate all the rice.

Then the old man said, "You are a nice person. I will tell you a secret. There is a magical rice cave. If you knock the cave three times, a lot of rice will come out."

The monk went to the cave. He knocked the cave three times. A lot of rice came out.

The monk came to this magical rice cave everyday. Again, he shared the rice with poor people day after day again.

Many days after, a bad monk found out about the cave. He came to the cave. He said, "I can dig a very big hole. More rice will come out. I can sell it." So he dug a very big hole.

Soon, a lot of rocks came out and hit the bad monk. He ran away. However, no more rice came out again.

(Hua Yi Press, 1992)

Content of the Story "Ban Pin Mountain"

In the beginning, Ban Pin Mountain was a beautiful mountain. There was a small village. One day, an old man came to the village. He said, "Hot dumplings! One for one cent, two for two cents and three for free!" All the other villagers asked for three dumplings.

The next day, the old man came again. He said, "Hot dumplings! One for one cent, two for two cents and three for free!" The villagers asked for three dumplings.

On the third day, the old man came again. He said, "Hot dumplings! One for one cent, two for two cents and three for free!" The villagers asked for three dumplings.

But then a young man asked for one dumpling. The villagers looked at him. The young man said, "I am sorry for the old man. He looks poor and I have one cent."

"Ha, Ha! It is you. Be my student." said the old man and the old man became a god. The god said, "Look at Ban Pin Mountain." Half of the dirt was gone. The lost part became dumplings. Everyone said, "Sorry" to the god because they were afraid of being punished. It was too late. Finally the god took the young man away and taught him magic.

(Xie, 2002a)

Assessment Sheet 1-5

Name: _____

Read each question and circle its right answer (25 points
for each).

- What came out after the bad monk dug the cave in
  the story "The Magical Rice Cave?"

  a. rice; b. rock; c. I cannot tell from the story.

- Where did the story "Ban Pin Mountain" happen?

  a. Taipei; b. Kaohsiung; c. Tainan

- What were the dumplings made of in the story "Ban
  Pin Mountain?"

  a. dirt; b. meat; c. vegetables

- Which one is wrong about the two stories "The
  Magical Rice Cave" and "Ban Pin Mountain?"

  a. They are both folktales.

  b. They are both time-ordered.

  c. They are both American stories.

Lesson Two
Hot Cross Buns

Level: 2nd & 3rd grade: Intermediate fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:
Learning Objective 1. To indicate the key point of the song "Hot Cross Buns"
Content Objective   2. To recognize vender songs or chants
Language Objective 3. To sing the song "Hot Cross Buns"

Warm-up: The teacher tells students that they will learn a Western song and asks them if they have heard any Western song.

Task Chain 1: *Indicating the key point of the song "Hot Cross Buns"*
1. Before singing the song, the teacher reminds students to listen to what the teacher sings. The teacher sings the song on Focus Sheet 2-1 (lyrics) once or twice while the children just listen.
2. The teacher asks students what they hear and writes down the response on the board. Then the teacher explains the vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students.
3. The teacher asks students how many times they hear "hot cross buns." If students do not confirm the answer, the teacher sings again.
4. The teacher sings and students are required to raise their hand every time when they hear "hot cross buns."

Task Chain 2: *Recognizing vender songs or chants*
1. The teacher introduces the origin of this song which was a street vender song and chant.
2. The teacher explains what a street vender song or chant is and asks students if they have heard this kind of song or chant.
3. The teacher reminds students that they

have heard a folktale which has a
street vender chant by asking "What was
it? Why do you thing it is a street
vender chant?" (in the story "Ban Pin
Mountain")

Task Chain 3: *Singing the song "Hot Cross Buns"*
    1. The teacher hands out Focus Sheet 2-1.
    2. The teacher sings the song again and
       asks students to clap the rhythm and
       then hum the tune of the music.
    3. Students are required to join in the
       actions and sing with the teacher.

Materials: Focus Sheet 2-1; Assessment Sheet 2-2

Formative Assessment:
Task Chain 1: All students can raise their hands every
           time when the song comes to the words "hot
           cross buns."
Task Chain 2: Three students can explain what vender
           songs or chants are.
Task Chain 3: Two thirds of the students can follow the
           teacher to sing the song accurately.

Summative Assessment:
Students will be able to sing the song "Hot Cross Buns"
fluently. The teacher grades according to Assessment
Sheet 2-2 (100 points).

90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

Focus Sheet 2-1
Lyrics of the Song "Hot Cross Buns"

Hot Cross Buns!

Hot cross buns!   Hot cross buns!

One a penny,   two a penny.

Hot cross buns!

Hot cross buns!   Hot cross buns!

If ye have no daughters,

Give them to your sons.

Source:

http://www.enchantedlearning.com/rhymes/Hotcross.shtml
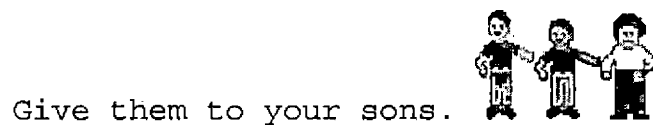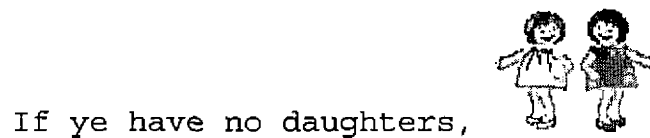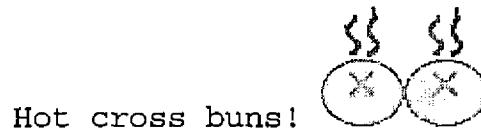
Assessment Sheet 2-2

Student's Name _____   Date _____

Category	Comment	Point
Understands the lyrics		/25
Is fluent		/20
Is clear		/20
Melody is accurate		/20
Volume is adequate		/15
Total		/100

Lesson Three
The Big Turnip

Level: 2nd &3rd grade: Intermediate fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:
Content Objective   1. To describe the growth of a turnip
Learning Objective   2. To distinguish the main idea of
                         the story "The Big Turnip"
Language Objective   3. To write an additional ending of
                         the story "The Big Turnip"

Warm-up: The teacher distributes Focus Sheet 3-1 and tells
        students that this is a story from the
        countryside of Taiwan.

Task Chain 1:   *Describing the growth of a turnip*
                1. The teacher directs students to look at
                    Focus Sheet 3-1 (illustrations of the
                    story "The Big Turnip).
                2. The teacher asks some questions about
                    the pictures like "What do you think
                    the man is doing?" "What is he
                    planting?" "How does he plant?"
                3. The teacher guides students to tell
                    what they know about a turnip like "How
                    does a farmer plant a turnip?" "How
                    long does it grow?" "Do you eat a
                    turnip?"
Task Chain 2:   Distinguishing the main idea of the story
                "The Big Turnip"
                1. The teacher directs students to follow
                    the frames of Focus Sheet 3-1 as the
                    story (on Focus Sheet 3-2) is told by
                    the teacher.
                2. The teacher asks students some literal
                    comprehension questions like "What did
                    Grandfather plant?" "How did
                    Grandfather plant?" "Whom did
                    Grandmother help?"
                3. The teacher writes down the answer on
                    the board and explains that any story
                    has a main idea. Students discuss the
                    main idea in groups of four.
                    (Grandfather, grandmother, their son,

and the son's wife tried to pull up the big turnip.) Students then tell their answers to the whole class. Last, the teacher writes down the children's answers and talks about the main idea with the students. The teacher assists students to choose the most appropriate answer.

Task Chain 3: *Writing an additional ending of the story "The Big Turnip"*
1. The teacher hands out Work Sheet 3-3.
2. Students discuss with their group an additional ending according to the main idea of this story, and write down their version in at least five complete sentences.
3. Each group shares their version with the other groups. When each group presents its version, students record their response on Check Sheet 3-4. So students will be able to present their version appropriately according to the request on Check Sheet 3-4

Materials: Focus Sheets 3-1 & 3-2; Work Sheet 3-3; Check sheet 3-4; Assessment Sheet 3-5

Formative Assessment:
Task Chain 1: Eight students can answer the questions about the growth of turnip suitably.
Task Chain 2: One fourth of the students can express the main idea of the story properly.
Task Chain 3: Every group can creatively write an additional ending of the story in at least five complete sentences.
Summative Assessment:
Students will be able to clearly share their version. The teacher grades according to Assessment Sheet 3-5 (100 points).

90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

95

Focus Sheet 3-1
Illustrations of the Story "The Big Turnip"

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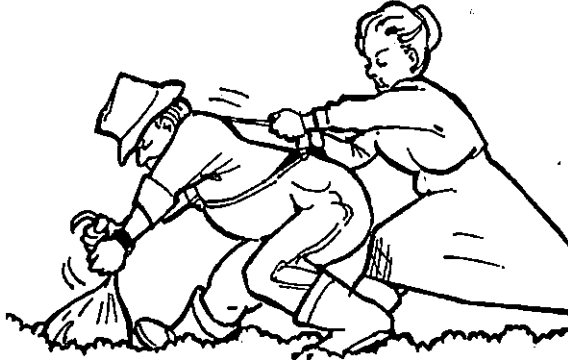
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Source: Green (1992).

Content of the Story "The Big Turnip"

Once upon a time, a grandfather planted a very small turnip seed.

He watered the seed and watched it grow into a small plant. Soon the small turnip seed grew into a big turnip.

The turnip grew bigger and bigger. One day Grandfather decided it was time to pull up the turnip to make a good soup for dinner. He pulled and pulled, but he could not pull it out.

He asked Grandmother to help him. Grandfather and Grandmother pulled and pulled on the turnip. But they could not pull it out.

Grandfather and Grandmother asked their son to help them. Grandfather, Grandmother, and their son pulled and pulled on the turnip. But still they could not pull it out.

Their son asked his wife to help them. Grandfather, Grandmother, their son, and the son's wife pulled and pulled on the turnip. Out came the turnip!

(Walter, 1992)

Work Sheet 3-3
New Ending of the Story "The Big Turnip"

What do you think happened after the big turnip was pulled from the ground? Write a story that tells all about what happened using at least five sentences.

Source: Green (1992).

Check Sheet 3-4
Check New Ending of the Story "The Big Turnip"

How did you feel?

Group: _____

1	The sentences are complete.	☺	😐	☹
2	The classmates told the story clearly.	☺	😐	☹
3	The story is from the main point.	☺	😐	☹
4	The story is fun.	☺	😐	☹
5	The story is creative.	☺	😐	☹

Assessment Sheet 3-5

Student's Name _____   Date _____

Category	Comment	Scores
New ending is consistent with the main point		/25
Content is creative		/25
Sentences are well structured		/20
Story is fun/humorous		/20
Effort is cooperative		/10
Total		/100

Lesson Four
The Grandaunt Tiger

Level: 2nd & 3rd grade: Intermediate fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:

Content Objective   1. To identify the most popular
                         subject matter of folktales
Learning Objective   2. To distinguish statements of fact
                         and opinion
Language Objective   3. To write down an opinion of the
                         story "The Grandaunt Tiger"

Warm-up: The teacher asks students if they have had an
         experience staying at home without adults.
         Students talk about their experiences. Then the
         teacher tells students that they will listen to a
         story having a similar situation.

Task Chain 1: *Identifying the most popular subject matter
               of folktales*
               1. The teacher displays the cover page of
                  the story "The Grandaunt Tiger" on
                  Focus Sheet 4-1 and encourages students
                  to read the title.
               2. The teacher tells students about the
                  subject of the story. (A long time ago,
                  people believed that when an animal
                  lived long enough, it would possess a
                  strange ability to transform into a
                  human and even devour humans.) Students
                  are told that gods and goddesses are
                  the most popular subject matter of
                  folktales in ancient Taiwan. Then they
                  talk about what kind of god or goddess
                  they have heard about. (God of the Sun,
                  God of the Animals, God of Trees.......)
               3. The teacher tells students that the
                  story "Grandaunt Tiger" is about a
                  sprite. Students were asked to guess
                  the story "The Grandaunt Tiger" through
                  looking at the pictures on Focus Sheet
                  4-2.

Task Chain 2:   *Distinguishing statements between fact and opinion*
1. The teacher hands out Focus Sheet 4-3 (the story itself) and asks students to point the words that the teacher reads when the teacher tells the story "The Grandaunt Tiger."
2. The teacher tells students that there are facts and opinions in any story. The teacher gives students some examples like "Fact: This is a pencil." "Opinion: I like this pencil." Then students discuss the differences.
3. The teacher reads some statements from the story "The Grandaunt Tiger" (ex. They lived in mountains; AKim was afraid; AKim poured hot water to Grandaunt Tiger). Students work in pairs to discuss and analyze their statement. The teacher writes down some statements that have debatable answers and encourages students to tell their reasons.
4. Students take turns giving their partners statements of fact and opinion. The listener must decide whether the statement is a fact or an opinion and support his or her choice with reasons.

Task Chain 3:   *Writing down an opinion of the story "The Grandaunt Tiger"*
1. The teacher asks students some questions to lead students to have opinions about the story, such as "What did Mother say before she left?" "Did the girls listen to her?" "What happened to the girls?"
2. The teacher hands out Work Sheet 4-4 (Some lines for students to write down opinion). Students discuss with their partner and write down their opinions on Work Sheet 4-4 using at least five complete sentences for reasons.
3. Students share their opinions with other groups. The teacher talks about the opinions told by the students.

Materials: Focus Sheets 4-1, 4-2, & 4-3; Work Sheet 4-4;
          Assessment Sheet 4-5

Formative Assessment:
Task Chain 1: Six students can guess the story "The
              Grandaunt Tiger" appropriately by observing
              the pictures.
Task Chain 2: Ten students can distinguish statements
              correctly.
Task Chain 3: Each group of students can write down their
              opinion properly using at least three
              complete sentences.
Summative Assessment:
Using Assessment 4-5, students will be able to answer the
questions correctly (100 points).

90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

The Grandaunt Tiger

Source: Xie (2002b).
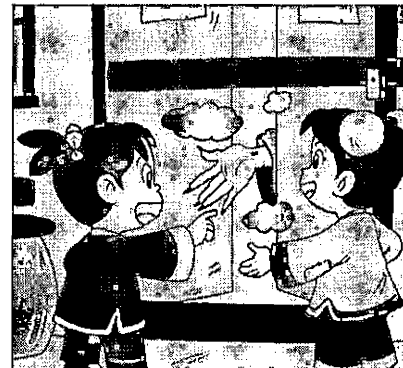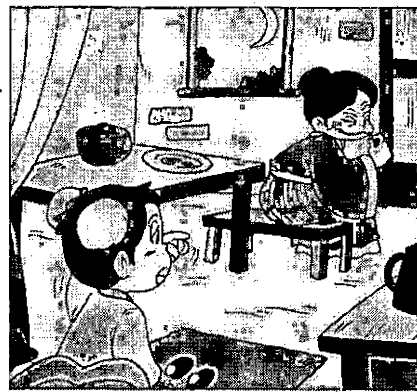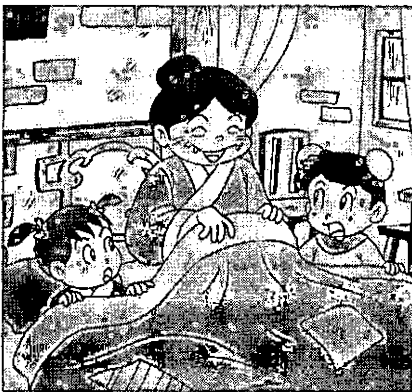
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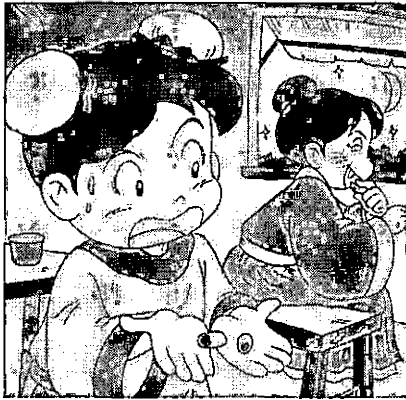
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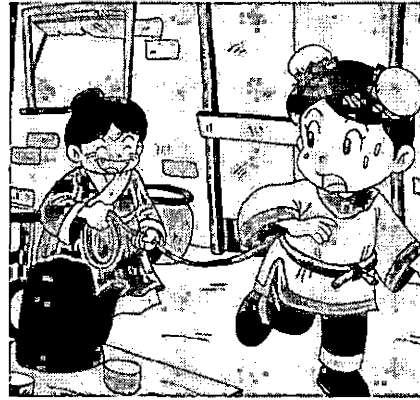
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Source: Xie (2002b).

Content of the Story "The Grandaunt Tiger"

There was a woman and her two daughters-AKim and AGiok. They lived in mountains. One day the woman said, "I am going shopping. Never open the door for any stranger." Then she left.
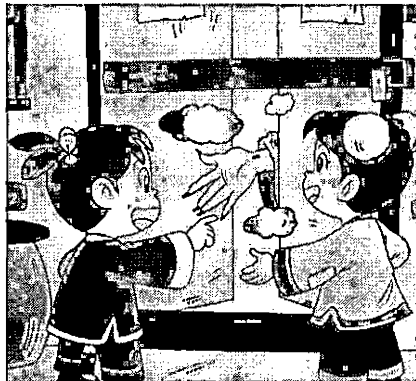
Later, a tiger knocked on the door. It said, "Hello, girls. May I come in? I come to play with you."
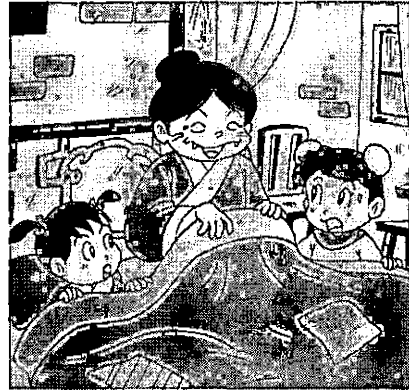
Akim said, "No. You are a stranger."

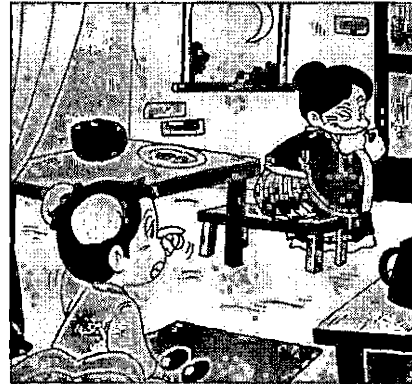The Tiger changed to their grandaunt and said, "Open the door. I am your grandaunt. See my hand."

The girls saw a hand, so they opened the door.

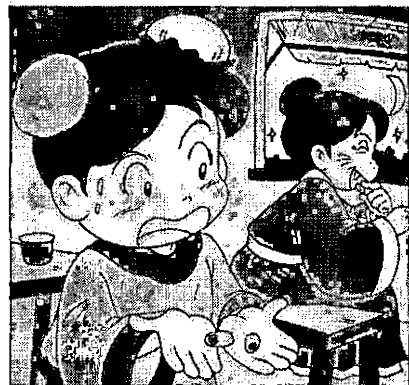At night, AKim, AGiok, and Grandaunt Tiger slept together.

Later, AKim heard a noise. She woke up. She did not see AGiok.

AKim saw Grandaunt Tiger was eating. She asked, "What are you eating, Grandaunt?"

The Grandaunt said, "I am eating peanuts. See!" The Grandaunt Tiger gave AKim something.

AKim saw some fingers! Grandaunt Tiger was eating AGiok!

AKim was afraid. She wanted to run out. She lied to Grandaunt Tiger, "I want to go to the restroom."
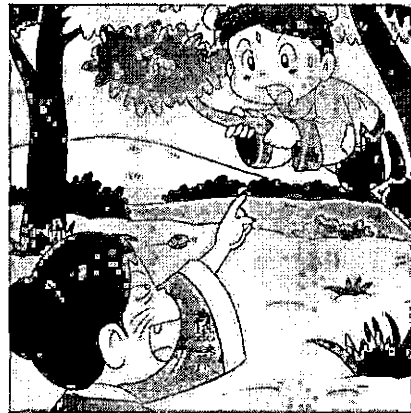
Grandaunt Tiger tied a rope on Akim's waist.

In the restroom, AKim tied the rope on a pot. Then she ran out.

Soon, Grandaunt Tiger found AKim in a tree. Grandaunt Tiger said, "You are only a little child. Come down or I will come to eat you."

AKim lied to Grandaunt Tiger, "Boil hot water. I want to eat a bird before I die." So, Grandaunt Tiger gave her hot water.

AKim cooked a bird. Then she said, "I will jump down. Open your mouth."

Grandaunt Tiger opened its mouth. Akim did not jump. She poured hot water on Grandaunt Tiger. Soon, Grandaunt Tiger died.

After Grandaunt Tiger died, AKim ran home.

Finally her mother came home. She was sad for AGiok. She said to Akim, "Never open the door for strangers."

(Xie, 2002b)

Work Sheet 4-4
Opinion about the Story "The Grandaunt Tiger"

With your partner, choose one character in the story and write down what you think about Akim, AGiok, Mother, or Grandaunt Tiger.

Assessment Sheet 4-5

Name: _____

    Circle sentences containing opinion (20 points for each).

- Grandaunt Tiger finally died.

- Akim was a brave girl.

- Akim and AGiok are little children.

- Grandaunt Tiger ate AGiok.

- The mother was sad for AGiok.

Lesson Five
Night Fun

Level: 2nd & 3rd grade: Intermediate Fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:

Content Objective	1.	To identify the setting of the poem "Night Fun"
Language Objective	2.	To model the poem "Night Fun"
Learning Objective	3.	To perform the poem "Night Fun" using choral reading

Warm-up: The teacher shares an experience of the sleeping time with students. The teacher stresses on what kind of sounds students hear when they on the bed.

Task Chain 1: *Identifying the setting of the poem "Night Fun"*

1. The teacher tells students that every story or poem has a setting as a background. (For example, in the story "The Grandaunt Tiger," it tells readers that the story happened in a mountain where a mother and two girls live...)
2. Students recall the story of other folktales ("Ban Pin Mountain" or "The Magical Rice Cave") and are encouraged to indicate what sentences describe settings.
3. The teacher reads the poem aloud with all of the expressions and sound effects. After reading the poem "Night Fun," the teacher asks students what they hear and the setting (bedtime).

Task Chain 2: *Modeling the poem "Night Fun"*

1. The teacher hands out Focus Sheet 5-1 (the poem itself). The teacher slowly reads the poem again while children follow the text with their eyes.
2. The teacher asks students what the sentence means and what messages the author wants to express.
3. Students read with the teacher little by little for the first time and gradually increase the speed, and add

movement and sound effects.

Task Chain 3: *Performing the poem "Night Fun" using*
choral reading
1. The teacher divides students into group of six. Students practice the poem with the group. Students are encouraged to use their own ways to interpret the poem.
2. Students perform the poem using choral reading.
3. The teacher applauds the students. Students choose the favorite two groups they think that performed well.

Materials: Focus Sheet 5-1; Assessment Sheet 5-2

Formative Assessment:
Task Chain 1: Three students can answer the questions about settings correctly.
Task Chain 2: Two third of the students can read the poem "Night Fun" with the teacher.
Task Chain 3: Students as a group can perform the poem "Night Fun" using choral reading.
Summative Assessment:
Students will be able to choral-reading the poem "Night Fun" with emotions. The teacher grades scores according to Assessment Sheet 5-2 (100 points).

90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

Content of the Poem "Night Fun"

Night Fun

I hear eating.

I hear drinking.

I hear music.

I hear laughter.

Fun is something

Grownups never have

Before my bedtime.

Only after.

(Viorst, 1981, p. 17)

Assessment Sheet 5-2

Student's Name _____   Date _____

Category	Comment	Scores
Is fluent		/25
Emotional contents		/25
Content is creative		/20
Volume is adequate		/20
Effort is cooperative		/10
Total		/100

Lesson Six
Alike and Different

Level: 2nd & 3rd grade: Intermediate fluency

Lesson Length: Forty minutes

Objectives:

Content Objective   1. To identify Taiwanese and Western
                       cultural elements from various
                       stories

Learning Objective 2. To compare and contrast two
                       stories "The Baby Water Buffalo"
                       and "The Man, the Boy, and the
                       Donkey" by using a Venn diagram

Language Objective 3. To verbalize similarity and
                       difference of the two stories "The
                       Baby Water Buffalo" and "The Man,
                       the Boy, and the Donkey" using
                       complete sentences

Warm-up: The teacher shows illustrations of a buffalo and
        a donkey (on Focus Sheet 6-1). Students answer
        the questions about the illustrations like "What
        is it?" "Have you seen it?" "Where can you see
        it?"

Task Chain 1: *Identifying Taiwanese and Western cultural
             elements from various stories*
        1. Classes are divided into two groups. The
           teacher tells students that each group
           will read a different folktale. (One is
           about a buffalo; another one is about a
           donkey. They are from two different
           cultures.) The teacher asks students the
           function of a buffalo and a donkey. The
           teacher reminds students that two
           folktales have similarity and difference
           of characters belonging to the two
           cultures.
        2. One group reads the story "The Baby
           Water Buffalo" on Focus Sheet 6-2 (the
           story itself); the other one reads the
           story "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey"
           on Focus Sheet 6-3 (the story itself).
           As students read the story, the teacher
           assists students who need help.

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3. One student of each group shares their story to the other group. After one group tells the story, other students can supply or ask questions for the part that is not clear enough.
4. The teacher asks students which story happened in Taiwan and which one happened in the West, and asks for their reasons. For example, "How can you tell?" (According to the setting, "The Baby Water Buffalo" is a Taiwanese folktale and "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" is a Western folktale.)

Task Chain 2: *Comparing and contrasting the two stories "The Baby Water Buffalo" and "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" by using a Venn diagram*

1. The teacher draws two circles on the board and writes "The Baby Buffalo" at the top of one circle, "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" on top of the other circle, and "alike" in the middle of the two circles.
2. The teacher asks students questions to name one way that one story is unique, or different from another story. Then the teacher records their responses in the appropriate space on the board diagram.
3. The teacher reminds students that they can look for similarities and differences in similar things. The class is divided into groups of four. The teacher reviews the Venn diagram with the students, having them name what goes in each area using Work Sheet 6-4. The teacher hands out Work Sheet 6-5. Students create their Venn diagram on Work Sheet 6-5 with partners.

Task Chain 3: *Verbalizing similarities and differences of the two stories "The Baby Water Buffalo" and "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" using complete sentences*

1. Students share their Venn diagram to other groups and explain their charts. Then the teacher asks other groups to name additional items for each area of

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the diagram.

2. After students' presentations, the teacher asks students which similarity/difference they think is the most important, the second most important, and so forth. Students talk about their opinions.

Materials: Focus Sheets 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3; Work Sheet 6-4 & 6-5; Assessment Sheet 6-6

Formative Assessment:

Task Chain 1: All students can identify to which culture the story belongs.

Task Chain 2: One fourth of the students can create their Venn diagram with partners.

Task Chain 3: One fourth of the students can tell the similarities and differences of the two stories "The Baby Water Buffalo" and "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" by looking at Venn diagram.

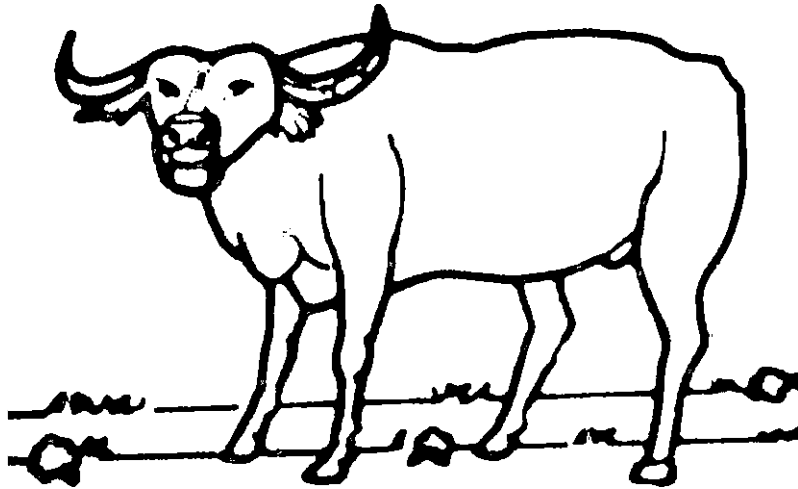Summative Assessment:

1. Using Assessment 6-6, students will be able to correctly order pictures of the story told by the teacher (100 points).

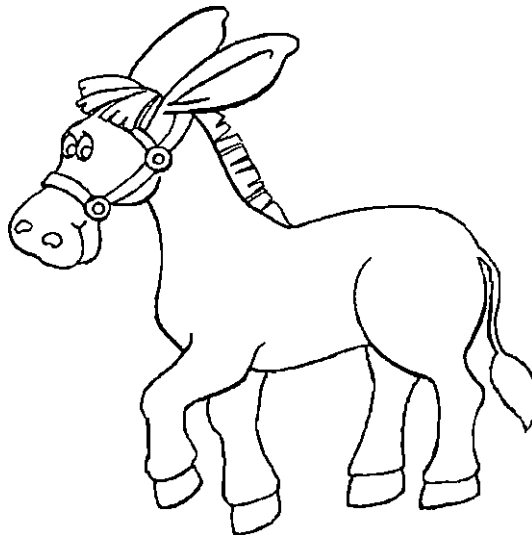| 90-100	Excellent
80-89	Good job
70-79	Needs improvement
<69	Study harder

Illustrations of a Water Buffalo and a Donkey

a water buffalo

a donkey

Source: Animal Veterinary Center (2004); Green (1992)

Content of the Story "The Baby Water Buffalo"

One morning, Mr. Lin and his grandson Ho went to a market. They walked along rice fields. They wanted to sell their baby water buffalo. They walked next to it. A man passed them. He said, "You have a water buffalo. Why do you walk?"

So Mr. Lin and Ho both got on the baby water buffalo. They kept going. Soon a farmer passed them. He said, "Poor water buffalo! You are both too heavy. Why don't you walk?"

So they got off the water buffalo. They kept going. Soon a woman passed them. She said, "Poor boy! Why does he walk?"

So Ho got on the water buffalo. They kept going. Soon a man passed them. He said, "Poor old man! Why a healthy boy ride, but an old man walks?"

So Ho got off the water buffalo. Mr. Lin got on it. Soon they passed a monk. He said, "Poor baby water buffalo! You should carry it."

So Mr. Lin and Ho carried the heavy water buffalo. But it was too heavy. They could not keep going.

Mr. Lin said, "We can do what we want. Why do we listen to others? Let us walk with our baby water

buffalo." So they put down the water buffalo. They walked

with it. Finally they arrived at the market.

(Cheney, 2004, p. 66)

Focus Sheet 6-3
Content of the Story "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey"

One morning, an old man and his son walked to a market. They walked along wheat fields. They wanted to sell their donkey. They walked next to it. A farmer passed them. He said, "You have a donkey. Why do you walk?"

So the old man put the boy on the donkey. They kept going. Soon they passed a man. He said, "Lazy boy. Why do you let your dad walk?"

So the boy got off the donkey. Then the old man got on it. They kept going. Soon they passed a woman. She said, "Lazy man. Why do you let your child walk?"

So the old man put the boy on the donkey. They both rode on it. They kept going. Soon they passed a priest. He said, "Poor donkey. Why do they ride on it?"

So the old man and the boy carried the donkey. When they passed a bridge, the donkey kicked them. Then it fell into the water. Soon, the donkey died. The old man felt bad. He said, "I do not have to listen to everyone. No one will be happy."

(Taylor, 2000, p. 66)

A   B
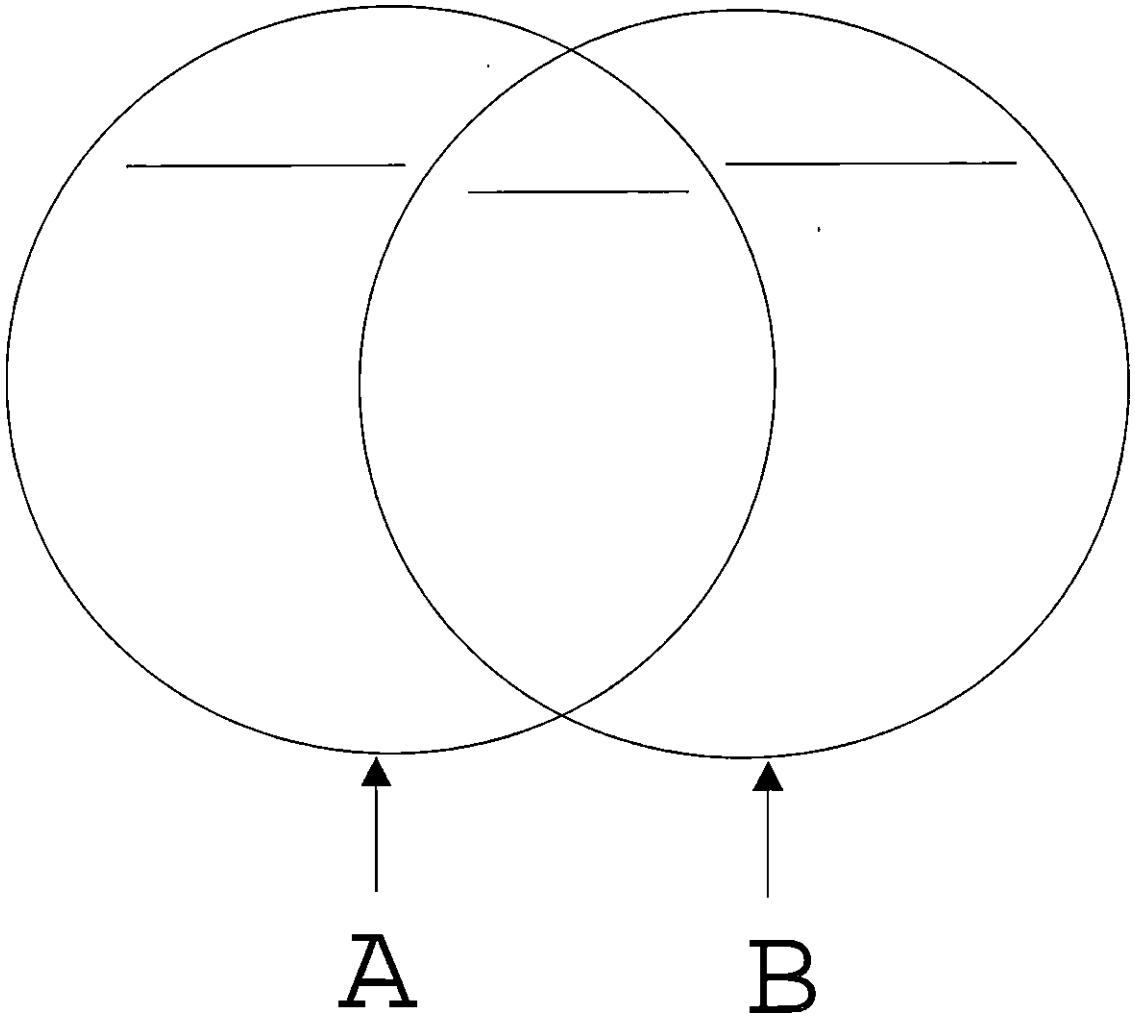
Work Sheet 6-5
Venn Diagram of the Two Stories

List at least three similarities and three differences between the stories "The Baby Water Buffalo" and "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" in the correct place.

The Baby Water

Buffalo   Alike

The Man, the
Boy, and the
Donkey
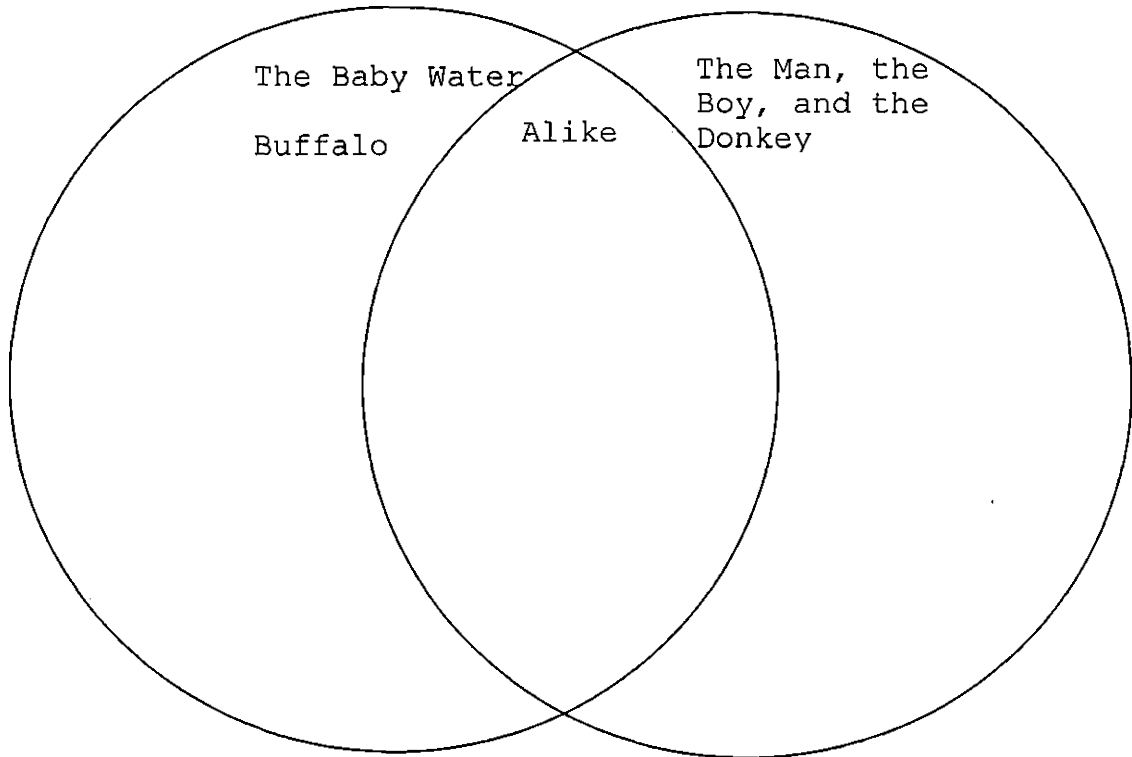
Assessment Sheet 6-6

Name: _____

First, cut the pictures on the bottom. Then listen to the story "The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey" and order the pictures. Last, paste them in the right box below (100 points totally).

1	2	3

4	5	6

Source: Taylor (2000)

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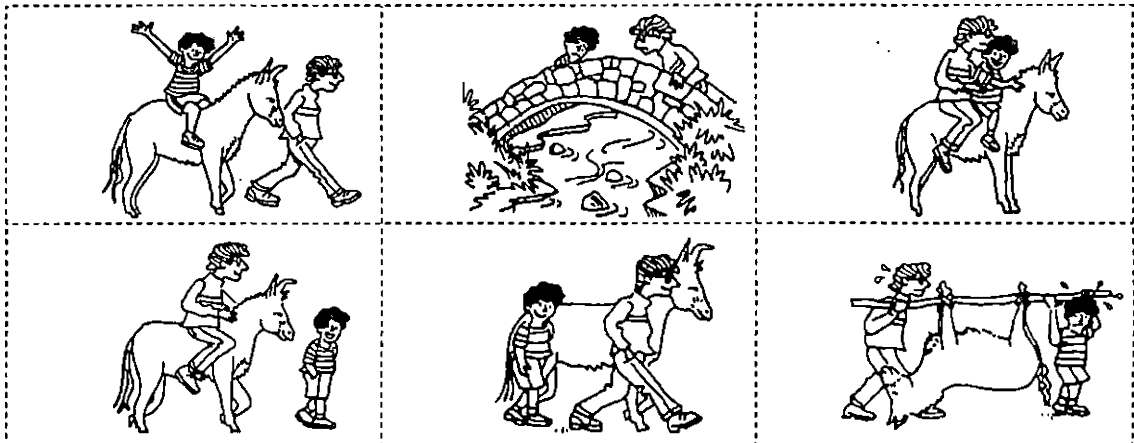
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