

The Ideology of the-Best-English-Teaching-Method in Taiwan's Children English Language Schools

Jackie Chang

English Department
National Pingtung University
Pingtung City, Taiwan

Abstract

Taiwanese people's motivation to learn English is a desire to communicate: a major obstacle to the mastery of spoken English has been the lack of opportunities to speak it. The traditional English teaching method cannot produce fluent English speakers. English teaching methodologies, such as English-only and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), have been widely adopted as practical and the best way to acquire English speaking proficiency in children English language schools, to the point where they are taken for granted by many Taiwanese people. The central argument of this study is that the evaluation of the so-called the-best-English-teaching-method in children English language schools and as common practice in Taiwanese society is ideological. To explore the ideological concept of the-best-English-teaching-method used in children English language schools, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was employed to analyze data drawn from children English language schools' promotional materials or advertisements. The results indicate the promotion of the-best-English-teaching-method by children English language schools has resulted in social injustice, such as native speaker ideology, native and non-native division, white and non-white division, and English proficiency gap in the rich and the poor and urban and rural areas. It is hoped that the results of this study can enable Taiwanese people to escape the ideologies which have been taken for granted for so long.

Keywords: Critical Discourses Analysis (CDA), ideology, the-best-English-teaching-method

Cite as: Chang, J. (2017). The Ideology of the-Best-English-Teaching-Method in Taiwan's Children English Language Schools. *Arab World English Journal*, 8 (4). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no4.2>

Introduction

In Taiwan, English is seen as the most useful and powerful language for international communication. As far as English teaching and learning is concerned, the main shifts in English teaching methodologies are the focus on communication and how English is used in real life situations. The acquisition of oral proficiency has become the first goal in English learning in Taiwan in the context of globalization (Chang, 2004). The traditional styles of teaching English, either a grammar-translation-method or rote memorization, are absolutely teacher-centered methods, so the learners are spoon-fed and passive. Consequently, the traditional English teaching methods cannot produce fluent English speakers. As a result, Taiwanese people seek help from English language schools to improve their English speaking proficiency (Wu, 2014). English language schools refer to schools that offer general English courses for different groups (pre-school children, elementary, secondary and tertiary students, and adults) and whose purposes are not geared towards academic tests. This study focuses on English language schools for children.

The methods employed in children English language schools emphasize active participation in the learning process; they include a variety of teaching aids and materials, handouts, activities, games and computers to assist learners in enhancing their English speaking proficiency. Moreover, the use of native English speaking teachers and small class sizes are other factors contributing to the success of children English language schools. Learners learn to use the language as a tool of communication rather than viewing it as one more subject to be memorized and regurgitated. English teaching methodologies, such as CLT Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the Direct Method, Total Physical Response (TPR), the Natural approach, and English-only immersion have been widely adopted as practical and the best ways to acquire English speaking proficiency in children English language schools; they have been taken for granted by many Taiwanese people since the 1990s (Chang, 2004). Fairclough (1989) argues that people are not aware that their “every day practices” constitute “ideological power” (p.33). In other words, the notion of ‘best’ English teaching method needs to be re-examined. Ideologies of English teaching and learning have been given little attention and have not yet been documented in Taiwan (Chang, 2016, Lu, 2011). The central argument of this study is that the promulgation of the so-called the-best-English-teaching-methods in children English language schools which have been taken for granted as common practices in Taiwanese society is ideological. Moreover, this ideology has resulted in social injustice in contemporary Taiwanese society.

To explore the ideological concept of the-best-English-teaching-method used in children English language schools, Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) was employed to analyze data drawn from children English language schools’ promotional materials/advertisements. The purpose of this study was not to attack teaching methods used in children English language schools, but to raise Taiwanese people’s awareness of the ideology the-best-teaching-English-method. The following are the research questions.

1. What English teaching methods, which are viewed as the most appropriate by children English language schools, are being advocated?
2. How has the-best-English-teaching-method resulted in social injustice in contemporary Taiwanese society?

Literature Review

Sheen (2002) points out that two extremes of language teaching methods have been encapsulated in the terms ‘focus-on-form’ and ‘focus-on-forms’ by Long in 1988 and 1990. According to Sheen (2002, p. 303), the focus-on-form approach is based on “the similarity between first and second language acquisition”; all classroom activities need to be based on communicative tasks. The focus-on-forms approach, on the other hand, “is based on the assumption that foreign or second language learning derives from general cognitive processes”. The traditional teaching of discrete grammatical points is employed in this approach. Sheen (2003) points out that examples of the focus-on-form approach are: the Direct Method, the Natural method, Audiolingualism, CLT, and so on. An example of focus-on-forms is the Grammar-translation method. All methods used in children English language schools in Taiwan belong to the focus-on-form approach (Chang, 2004). McKay (2003) argues that there is a tendency for English language teaching methodology to rely on a native speaker model. As mentioned earlier in Introduction, one very important factor of the success of children English language schools is the use of native English speaking teachers. Therefore, two popular teaching methodologies: English-only immersion and CLT, the premises of which are based on a native speaker model, are investigated in the following section.

English-only Immersion Method

Immersion language programs have grown in popularity since their origins in the mid-1960s in Canada in which French is used as a second language teaching method for English-speaking children living in Quebec (Sievert, 2007; Walker & Tedick, 2000). The concept of language immersion is well accepted and encouraged by many researchers (Chuang, 2007; Finnamore, 2006; Genesee & Cloud, 1998; McCarty, 1993; Swain & Johnson, 1997; Tedick, Christian, & Fortune, 2011). The advocates of the immersion method argue that there is extensive and widely accepted research supporting bilingual education for children (cf. Chuang, 2007; Tedick et al., 2011).

The English-only immersion method is derived from the Natural or Direct method (Auerbach, 1993; Howatt, 1984). According to *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education* (Colin & Jones, 1998, p. 671 & p. 692), the principles of the Natural or Direct method are as follows. First language and second language skills are acquired in the same way. Only the target language is used, and no translations are offered. Native speaker or native-like fluency is required. Teachers speak only the target language in class and the method focuses on speaking and listening rather than reading and writing. English language schools tend to be more successful in applying the Natural or Direct Method because of learners’ high level of motivation; native speakers were always employed. It is not surprising that many children English language schools in Taiwan publicize English-only immersion instruction as the best teaching method; it has become a very powerful marketing tool.

Phillipson (1992, p.185) argues that “English is best taught monolingually” (one of five basic tenets in the Makerere Report by the British Council in 1961); this is an ideology in English language teaching (ELT). It implies that native speakers of English are considered as the ideal teachers since English should be taught monolingually, a belief that has been taken for granted as a fundamental principle of ELT in the world. Auerbach (1993) argues that English-only instruction in ESL countries has been regarded as “a ‘natural’ and ‘common sense practice’ which is rooted in a particular ideological perspective that serves to reinforce inequities in the broader social order”

(p.9). Many researchers (Auerbach, 1993; Cummins, 1986; Huang, 2009; Lee, 2010; Lotherington, 1996; Lucas & Katz, 1994; Morrison & Lui, 2000; Phillipson, 1992; Wei, 2013; Wiley & Lukes, 1996) argue that a monolingual approach to teaching English is ideological. However, in reality English-only immersion teaching is the most popular teaching method for children in English language schools in Taiwan (Chang, 2004). This method reinforces the ideology of native speakers of English as ideal English teachers. Whether or not English is the only means of communication in an English as foreign language (EFL) classroom, English educators need to consider social and cultural factors, as well as students' motivation, goals, and proficiency.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

CLT has remained an influential approach since it was implemented in the 1970s. In particular, the introduction of CLT into EFL countries has provoked a great deal of debate globally, concerning the appropriateness of CLT.

Many researchers (Breen, 1985; Breen & Candlin, 2001; Brown, 1994; Harmer, 2003; Long, 1991; Richards & Rodgers, 1985; Savignon, 2003, 2007), particularly in ESL countries, argue that CLT is rightly the dominant method in ELT. As a result, CLT has been largely promoted by both private English language schools and governments in ESL and EFL countries. Taiwan is no exception (Chang, 2004; Liao, 2007). CLT has been promoted by Taiwan's government since the 1996's Nine-year Comprehensive Curriculum. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has issued English curriculum standards for primary and secondary school English education, which includes giving students communication skills (Taiwan Elementary and Secondary Educator community, 2014). However, the widespread acceptance of CLT has been challenged in EFL countries. In Taiwan, the appropriateness of CLT has also been challenged. Several studies during the last decade (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Fong, 2016; Huang, 2016; Hung, 2016; Kung, 2009; Tsai & Lee, 2007; Yang, Y. C. 2009) on the difficulties in implementing CLT in tertiary, secondary and primary schools have been conducted in Taiwan. Several findings can be drawn from these studies. Based on these studies, the challenges are derived from: (1) teachers unfamiliar with CLT and inadequate teacher training (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Huang, 2016; Tsai & Lee 2007), (2) students' resistance to class participation, low English proficiency and mixed English ability (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Fong, 2016; Huang, 2016; Tsai & Lee, 2007), (3) the educational system's test-oriented teaching method, large class size, insufficient resources, passing grammar-based examinations and limited teaching hours (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Fong, 2016; Hung, 2016; Kung, 2009; Tsai & Lee, 2007; Yang, Y. C., 2009), and (4) CLT proving ineffective in an EFL setting, lack of English environment and lack of efficient assessment instruments (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Tsai & Lee, 2007). These study results have yielded valuable insights into factors hindering the implementation of CLT in the Taiwanese educational system. CLT does not provide a solution to English teaching problems in Taiwan.

While CLT is employed in children English language schools, research in relation to CLT in English language schools is scant. Only one study regarding CLT implementation in children English language schools in Taiwan was found. The main finding of Yu's study (2009) was that even though students (7 Taiwanese children) learned English from native English speaking teachers and the school imposed an English-only policy in the classroom, what they learned cannot

be put into practice in real life situations in Taiwan, because English is not used in Taiwan's daily life and the content of teaching materials were based on English speaking countries.

In other words, children English language schools do not present a solution to English proficiency since English is not used in Taiwanese people's daily life. English language schools claim to have the-best-English-teaching-method, but it cannot solve the problem of Taiwanese people's poor speaking proficiency (Wu, 2014) because comparisons reveal that Taiwanese people's English ability is falling behind most of their counterparts in EFL countries in Asia, which is an alarming phenomenon (Chang, 2017; Crawford & Chang, 2011). In other words, the chosen teaching method is not the decisive factor. While the so-called the-best-English-teaching-method in English language schools is ideological, no other work explores how this has resulted in social injustice. Therefore, it is hoped that the results of this study will raise Taiwanese people's awareness in relation to pedagogical issues that arise from the perspective of the-best-English-teaching-method in children English language schools.

Methodology

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA considers "the social, cultural, economic and political ways in which people are inequitably positioned" and "how the production and reception of texts is ideologically shaped by relations of power" (Pennycook, 1997, p. 23 & p. 28). Clearly, CDA concerns with the relation with texts, inequality, ideology, and power with a society. Analysis in the field of CDA often focus on media texts, such as advertising, newspaper reporting, television commercials, internet and so on. Wallace (1995) argues that "Even when we look referentially at the content of the text itself, what is omitted is, arguably, ideologically significant, even in apparently uncontroversial texts" (p.339). In other words, children English language school promotional materials may, at first cursory examination, seem mundane and ideologically naïve, but which in fact convey ideological concept.

To investigate how the ideology of the-best-English-teaching-method in English learning is manifested in children English language school promotional materials, and how this ideology has resulted in social inequality in Taiwan, Fairclough's (1992) conception of a three-dimensional discourse model (see Figure 1), the most well-known CDA theoretical framework, was employed in this study.

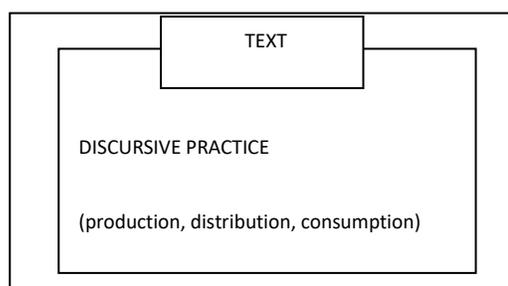


Figure 1. Three-dimensional Conception of Discourse (reproduced from Fairclough, 1992, p.73)

How this model can be employed in children English language school promotional materials will be demonstrated in the data analysis.

Data Collection

Forty school fliers were collected in four cities (Pingtung, Kaohsiung, Tainan and Chiayi) in Southern Taiwan by visiting these locations in August and September in 2016. A total of 56 websites was collected and downloaded through www.yahoo.com and www.google.com in 2017. Fifty six commercials (from 1998 – 2017) are from 11 different children English language schools were broadcast on leading television stations and were downloaded from their schools' websites in 2017.

Table 1

Background Information of the Data

Promotional materials	Coding	Total
School fliers	40 (LF1- 40)	40
School websites	56 (LW1-56)	56
School Television Commercials	56 (TC1-56)	56

Data Analysis

In this study, school address, school names, phone numbers, email addresses, and contact people are excluded and the symbol “XXX” is placed to protect their identities. Translation of Mandarin Chinese data into English is underlined. LF23 and LF24 serve as examples of how Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse model was used to realize the concept of the-best-English-teaching-method method.

First dimension – text analysis (description). The first dimension ‘text’, refers to children English language school promotional materials (both written and multi-modal texts). As far as written texts are concerned, the heading of LF23 indicates six different teaching methods in Mandarin Chinese, 母語教學法 mother tongue teaching method, 環境教學法 environment method, 遊戲教學法 playing game method, TPR (Total Physical Response) 教學法, 自然拼音教學法 phonic method, and 螺旋式教學法 spiral teaching method were used in the school. These six methods were categorized as English-only methods, since the photos depict the methods being employed by native speakers.

The Mandarin Chinese slogan in LF24 - 全外師教學生動活潑化學習 All foreign teachers teaching method, learning English in a lively and active manner and 全美語教學 in the body text All American English teaching method, do not specifically indicate exactly what kind of teaching methods (such as CLT or Direct Method or TPR) are used. Clearly, 全美語教學 All American English teaching method indicates that it is an English-only method.

As far as images are concerned, a photo or a picture or a shot in the language school promotional materials is deemed to contain the concept of the-best-English-teaching-method if it

shows teachers conducting teaching activities or tasks either in the classroom or outdoors. Two categories, *English-only* teaching method and *Others* are used in the images analyzed this study. The English-only immersion teaching category counts individuals depicted in photos, revealing that only foreign teachers conduct the teaching activities. The *Others* category includes a native and non-native co-teaching system and/or only non-native speakers teaching. Five photos in LF23 and three photos in LF24 are categorized as the English-only method and no photos in *Others* category were found.

Second dimension – processing analysis (interpretation). The second dimension analysis focuses on what children English language schools' objectives of producing the text are and how the text is interpreted. The analysis of written texts and photos of LF23 and LF24 demonstrate that English-only immersion by native English speaking teachers as the most popular method is promoted by children English language schools. Clearly, the purpose of the children English language schools is to sell their product "English".

Third dimension – social analysis (explanation). The third dimension is concerned with connections between micro (children English language schools) and macro (Taiwanese society) relations. The presence of written language or photos in FL23 and FL24 intentionally employed by children English language schools to convey the ideological concept English-only-immersion method in teaching children English speaking proficiency in Taiwan. How this ideology has resulted in social inequality in Taiwan will be presented in the Discussion section.

Results

Television Commercials

One of the salient results is that every children English language school uses an English-only immersion teaching method, since only native speakers of English portrays teachers in the commercials. Moreover, there is no Chinese during the teaching and learning process. Nine out of 56 commercials contain Chinese English teachers. However, these Chinese English teachers are portrayed as teacher assistants rather than English teachers, since they are not in charge of teaching during teaching process but teaching assistants.

As far as teaching methods are concerned, the commercials do not specially indicate exactly what kind of teaching methods are used, but all methods used in the commercials belong to the focus-on-form approach. These commercials can be cat put into two main categories: integration of e-teaching methods (13 commercials) or without e-teaching methods (43 commercials).

In integration of e-teaching method commercials present that the classroom is equipped with computers or interactive whiteboard systems. The school English course is taught by native English speaking teachers with a new teaching method which integrates e-teaching method. These commercials promote English learning as a practical skill and assumes that English can be learned through computer technology in a teacher-student interaction method. English instruction here pays attention only to listening and speaking skills. In addition, they emphasize that students should acquire English by Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) practice and mimicry of native speakers of English.

As far as non-integration of e-teaching method is concerned, one of the central themes of all commercials is the repeated assertion that Taiwanese children will acquire English naturally through interesting, lively, interactive methods such as using activities, flashing cards, games, storytelling, and so on by native English speaking teachers.

Moreover, every commercial suggests that English can be learned in a fun and easy way in the school's playful learning environment or outdoor activities and that this "best method" will achieve extremely positive outcomes. The outcomes include becoming a fluent English speaker (every commercial), promising a future success in business, career, education, both in Taiwan and abroad (12 commercials), providing self-improvement in ability, character, confidence, potential, imagination (9 commercials), and fostering a global perspective (7 commercials). Moreover, native English speaking teachers offer English as the tool to assist Taiwanese language learners to achieve the above mentioned outcomes.

Written Texts in Fliers and Websites

A total of 51 slogans and 156 terms contain the concept of the English-only teaching (Table 2). LW24 an English slogan and LF4 a Chinese slogan are two examples indicating the best-English-teaching-method.

No Chinese, English Only! (LW24)

100% 美式啟發教學 (LF4)

100% American style inspiring teaching method (LF4)

Many slogans and terms in fliers and websites, like television commercials, do not specifically indicate exactly what kind of teaching methods are used. A key finding is that all methods used in the collected data belong to the focus-on-form approach.

"As in other areas of commerce, new methods (and sometimes old methods in new packaging) are marketed under different brand labels" (Canagarajah, 1999, p.104). Methods such as, all foreign teachers, All-in-English, American English teaching method, American Style, English-only, ESL, immersion, mother tongue teaching method, natural, TPR and Western can be viewed as *English-only immersion*.

The highest frequency of the *English-only immersion method* demonstrates that it is widely believed that the best teaching method is to teach speaking proficiency. Moreover, since American English is preferred in Taiwan (Chang, 2016), 17 slogans and 51 terms contain two ideological concepts: the-best-English-teaching-method and native speakers with American accent are preferred. Although there is only one school that claims that CLT is used, methods such as cooperative, e-learning, interactive, play and learn, situational, student-centered, and topic-based belong to CLT since they are some main features of CLT (Jones, 2001). *The best method* includes the best, correct, the first choice, and No. 1 teaching method. Although they do not indicate specifically what kind of methods are the best, they implicitly indicate that the focus-on-form approach is the best. Methods described as bilingualism, caring, easy, eclectic, energetic, inspiration, interesting, Montessori, and Vygotsky are *Other focus-on-form methods*; they suggest that the *focus-on-form* approach is very different from the traditional teacher-centered approach.

Table 2

The-best-English-teaching-method in School Fliers and Websites

Method	Slogans	Terms
English-only immersion	27	97
CLT	10	47
Best teaching method	9	4
Others	5	8
Total	51	156

Photos

Table 3 indicates that a total of 351 out of 396 photos (88.64%) containing the concept of the *English-only* method and 45 photos (11.36%) of the *Others* method were found. The *English-only teaching* category in the figure counts individuals depicted in photos, revealing that only Caucasians conduct any teaching activities. The *Others* category includes a native and non-native English speaking teacher co-teaching system (32 photos) and only non-native English speaking teachers teaching (13 photos). There is no CLT found in the still images because the problem with CLT is that the term has always meant a multitude of different things to different people (Harmer, 2003, p. 289). It seems that any teaching activity involving teacher and student interaction can be called communicative, as pointed out by Harmer (2003). Confirming Harmer's viewpoint, a total of 329 photos (83.08%) are CLT since every photo shows a teacher using a student-centered and interactive teaching method. Most of the English-only immersion methods found in the corpus are arguably CLT.

Table 3

The-best-English-teaching-method in Still Images

Method	Total	%
English-only immersion	351	88.64
Others	45	11.36
Total	396	100.00

Discussion

The results of this study were discussed based on the research questions proposed in the Introduction. The central argument of this session is that the-best-English-teaching-method ideology has resulted in English language teaching and learning injustice.

English Language Teaching Injustice - Teachers

A special focus on TV commercials and photos indicates that English-only immersion and CLT reinforced the ideology of native speakers of English as ideal-English-teacher in teaching English speaking proficiency. Table 3 illustrates that 351 out of 396 teachers are native speakers of English. Clearly, the results of the still images show that native speakers of English are ideal English teachers. As far as a native speaking English teacher and a Chinese English teacher co-teaching system (32 out of 396 photos) is concerned, it demonstrated that native speakers play a more important role in English teaching, since the non-native speakers in these photos are portrayed as assistants rather than teachers, meaning that they are not in charge of teaching. As

Phillipson (1992) suggests, the tenet that the ideal English teacher is the native speaker is a twin to the tenet that English is best taught monolingually. Obviously, the children English language school are marketing native English speakers as ideal-English-teachers. Moreover, a relatively high frequency of *American English teaching* in written texts demonstrate that American English teachers are preferred. Since, American English equals Standard English in Taiwan (Chang, 2016), American and Canadian teachers who speak English with a North American accent are considered as the ideal English teachers for teaching English proficiency. Clearly, there is a native and non-native dichotomy in ELT in Taiwan. The result indicates that native English speaking teachers with a North American accent are regarded as better English teachers than non-native English speaking teachers in teaching speaking proficiency in children English language schools.

The result not only illustrates that there is a native and non-native dichotomy, but also a white and non-white division in ELT in Taiwan, since only two photos of foreign teachers are non-Caucasians (American-Africans). Moreover, in the 45 photos portraying local English teachers, it is very difficult to identify whether or not they are native speakers of English. The result illustrates that in the lucrative English teaching business in Taiwan, a preference for Caucasian teachers exists. In other words, there are white and non-white native speaking English teacher divisions in ELT in Taiwan. Furthermore, it is ironic that in English language schools in Taiwan that it can sometimes be a disadvantage to be a person of Chinese descent born in any other English speaking country. From legal and immigration standpoints, they are foreigners, because they were born and brought up in an English speaking country. In reality, since they do not look Caucasian, they face discrimination, and experience difficulty in finding work, or in commanding rates of pay equal to that of their Caucasian peers. Native and non-native and white and non-white issues are well documented in Teachers Against Discrimination in Taiwan Organization (Hales, 2013).

There is plenty of evidence in this study that native speakers, particularly Caucasians with a North American accent, have the more prestigious status, and are given preference in employment in children English language schools. It has resulted in inequality among native speakers of English. It has created a division or segregation among professionals in English teaching and learning in Taiwan. Generally speaking, non-native English speaking English teachers have to struggle to achieve what often comes as a birthright to their competitors. In short, this native speaker model ideology has resulted in racial, linguistic and social inequalities among English teachers in teaching children English.

English Language Learning Injustice – Learners

The result indicates that children English language schools promote English teaching as a practical skill, and it suggests that English can be learned easily if the ideal teaching method is used: interactive immersion classroom teaching with an engaging native English speaking teacher with the latest audio-visual computer technology and different types of teaching aids and materials. After school, Taiwanese children can learn English at home via online English learning. What all this reveals is that children English language school promotional materials instill into the audience the ideology, that there is one best way to acquire English proficiency, and moreover, English teaching and learning is always autonomous and never affected by social, cultural and economic conditions outside the classroom.

The reality is that disadvantaged children often have limited access to Internet and cannot afford to study in children English language schools (Gerber, 2014). A nationwide questionnaire survey on educational resources in elementary schools in Taiwan was conducted by Child Welfare League Foundation in 2013 (Lee, 2013). The subjects of that study were 2,443 5th and 6th graders from urban areas (1,330 students) and rural areas (1,213 students) and 225 school teachers in rural areas. The results indicate that “58.7% of children in rural areas did not have a computer or Internet access at home, while 88.3% of the children in wealthier areas have an average of more than three computers at home” (Lee, 2013, p.3). In other words, disadvantaged children have the least access to the Internet. The survey also indicates that “94.9% of the children in remote areas did not have access to English-language reading materials” (Lee, 2013, p.3), and around 25.2% could not write the English alphabet. Moreover, 68.4% of children in rural areas cannot afford to attend children English language schools because they are from financially disadvantaged families; in urban areas, most children from richer families attend children English language schools. Similar results were also found in many studies (Chen, 2011; Lee & Wang, 2007; Liao, 2008; Lin & Chen, 2013; Sun; 2012; Wang, 2009; Yang, Y. F., 2009) on the current practice on English curriculum and instruction at remote schools in Taiwan.

Moreover, the desired outcome of CLT is that learners communicate successfully in the target language in real situations (Knight, 2001). In other words, English is learned essentially in order to communicate with native speakers of English. Models for the acquisition of English are native speakers of English. It is only wealthy families who can afford to send their children to English language schools and/or send them abroad to immerse themselves in real life communication situations in an English-speaking country. As Phillipson (1992) suggests, mastery of English enhances the power and control of a privileged few. The end result is that reaching high levels of English proficiency has become the exclusive privilege of the wealthy. English is often touted as a way to lift poor people out of poverty but in contemporary Taiwanese society, the rich get richer because they can afford to learn the kind of English that opens doors while the poor get poorer because they cannot.

In short, the promotion of the-best teaching method by children English language schools has resulted in English language learning injustice, such as English proficiency gap in urban and rural areas and the rich and poor.

Conclusion and Implications

The results demonstrate that a widely adopted monolingual approach (either English-only teaching method or CLT) as a more practical method to teach English proficiency in Taiwan is ideological. The doctrine that English needs to be taught monolingually by native speakers implies that the ideal English teachers are native speakers of English. The promotion of the-best-English-teaching-method by children English language schools has resulted in social injustice among English teachers and learners. The issues raised in this study, such as the native speaker ideology, native and non-native division, white and non-white division, and English proficiency gap in urban and rural areas have a strong impact on teacher identity, the classroom, the students and society. These issues shape the lives of the learners, the teachers, policy makers and almost every individual, since they are embedded in social, economic and political contexts. English teaching

method is only one of the factors in ELT; social, cultural and political factors play more important roles.

There are several implications derived from this study. The first implication is that there is strong evidence that indicates non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers by at least four to one (Crystal, 2008) and non-native English speakers are more likely to communicate with non-native speakers than with native speakers of English (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2009). Therefore, within a global context, communication is not going to be restricted to the use of any particular variety of English or type of native English speaking teachers. Therefore, the English language learning goal should not only rely on native speaker norms or English speaking cultures.

Second, Prabhu (1990) and Holliday (1994) argue there is no one best teaching methodology since the choice of method should be context-dependent. As Holliday (1994, p. 166) suggests, most teaching methodologies were primarily designed for ESL situations. What works in a certain situation or setting will not always transfer easily or successfully to another. This also implies that English educators need to consider how English teaching is embedded in the local or Taiwanese context.

Third, current English language program and curriculum designs are based on communicative competence, especially listening and speaking proficiency. However, the result indicates that promotion of English-only immersion, CLT and native English speaking teachers are not producing fluent Taiwanese English speakers. The implication is that successful English education needs a well-designed curriculum, qualified English teachers, sufficient resources and funding, appropriate teaching materials and teaching methods, appropriate assessment, positive attitudes towards local languages, and an evaluation of the educational and social impact.

About the Author:

Dr. Jackie Chang is an assistant professor at National Pingtung University in Taiwan. Chang teaches English language methodology and English language curriculum design and evaluation. The focus of Chang's research interest is the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), in particular, the social, cultural, and political contexts of EFL.

References

- Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1), 9-32.
- Breen, M. P. (1985). Authenticity in the language classroom. *Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 60-8.
- Breen, M. P., & Candlin, C. N. (2001). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. In D. R. Hall & A. Hewings (Eds.), *Innovation in English language teaching: A reader* (pp. 9-26). London, UK: Routledge.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Rentice Hall Regents.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Chang, J. (2004). *Ideologies of English teaching and learning in Taiwan*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.

- Chang, J. (2016). The ideology of American English as standard English in Taiwan. *Arab World English Journal*, 7(4), 80-96. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2898629
- Chang, M. H. & Goswami, J. S. (2011). Factors affecting the implementation of communicative language teaching in Taiwanese college English classes. *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 3-12, Retrieved from <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/view/10754>
- Chang, R. S. (2017, October 19). English skills go beyond textbooks. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/CjiUuQ>
- Chen, W. W. (2011). *A study on new immigrant children's English learning achievement, learning attitude and learning challenge in elementary schools*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://nccur.lib.nccu.edu.tw/retrieve/82004/101101.pdf>
- Chuang, N. (2007). *Cultural identity among bilingual students: From students' perspectives*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.
- Colin, B., & Jones, S. P. (1998). *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education*. Celvedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Crawford, V., & Chang, P. (2011, April 18). Embracing English quality control. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/wcfxd8>
- Crystal, D. (2008). Two thousand million? *English Today*, 24(1), 3-6.
- Cummins, J. (1986). Bilingual education and anti-racist education. *International Books for Children Bulletin*, 17(3&4), 9-12.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Critical language awareness*. London, UK: Longman.
- Finnamore, S. M. (2006). *Immersion in a language of power: A case of the English immersion pedagogy of an elementary school in China*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, MN. Retrieved from <http://pqdd.sinica.edu.tw/cgi-bin2/Libo.cgi?>
- Fong, J. (2016). *Perceptions and practices of communicative language teaching: A case study of primary school English teachers in Taiwan*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndltd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/gs32/gsweb.cgi/ccd=IDLtF/fulltextdeclare>
- Genesee, F., & Cloud, N. (1998). Multilingualism is basic. *Educational Leadership*, 55(6), 62-65.
- Gerber, A. (2014, November 25). Activists target listening tests. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/qZ8lyL>
- Hales, J. (2013, November 12). *TADIT equal opportunity employers list*. Retrieved from <http://taditaiwan.wordpress.com/>
- Harmer, J. (2003). Popular culture, methods, and context. *ELT Journal*, 57(3), 288-294.
- Holliday, A. (1994). *Appropriate methodology and social context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Howatt, A. P. R. (1984). *A history of English language teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Huang, S. H. (2016). Communicative language teaching: Practical difficulties in the rural EFL classrooms in Taiwan. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(24), 186-202. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1112915.pdf>

- Huang, Y. P. (2009) English-only instruction in post-secondary education in Taiwan: Voices from students. *Hwa Kang Journal of English Language & Literature*, 15, 145-157.
- Hung, Y. P. (2016). *Communicative language teaching in Taiwan: Teachers' perceptions and practices*. Unpublished master's thesis. Ming Chuan University, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndltd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/gs32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=2Q1hWj/fulltextdeclare>
- Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: Attitude and identity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, J. F. (2001). CALL and the responsibilities of teachers and administrators. *ELT Journal*, 55(4), 360-367.
- Knight, P. (2001). The development of EFL methodology. In Christopher N. Candlin & Neil Mercer (Eds.), *English language in its social context: A reader* (pp. 147-166). London, UK: Routledge.
- Kung, Y. C. (2009). *US/UK – trained English teachers vs. locally – trained English teachers: Beliefs and practices in communicative language teaching*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chengchi University, Taipei City, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://dspace2.lib.nccu.edu.tw/bitstream/140.119/37298/1/100501.pdf>
- Lee, I. C. (2013, January 22). Students in remote areas being left behind: Survey. *Taipei Times*. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/i46Sq4>
- Lee, J. (2010). Ideologies of English in the South Korean “English Immersion” debate. In M. T. Prior, Y. Watanabe, & S.K. Lee (Eds.), *Selected proceedings of the 2008 Second Language Research Forum* (pp. 246-260). Somerville, MA: Cascadilla. Retrieved from <http://www.lingref.com/cpp/slrf/2008/paper2397.pdf>
- Lee, S. L. & Wang, T. (2007). Determinants of children's English learning opportunities: Poverty vs. Residence. *Formosan Education and Society*, 12(1), 113-115.
- Liao, C. H. D. (2008). *English reading and writing proficiency of Southeast Asian immigrant's children in urban and rural areas: A case study on third grade students of elementary schools, Taichung County*. Unpublished Master's thesis, National Chi Nan University, Nantou County, Taiwan.
- Liao, P. (2007). Teachers' beliefs about teaching English to elementary school children. *English Teaching & Learning*, 31(1), 43-76. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/HsgXGN>
- Lin, C. Y., & Chen, Y. M. (2013). The comparison of English learning between two ethnic groups. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(4), 670-678. Retrieved from <http://www.academypublication.com/issues/past/jltr/vol04/04/04.pdf>
- Long, M. H. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In C. Kramsch (Ed.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Lotherington, H. (1996). A consideration of the portability and supportability of immersion education: A critical look at English immersion in Melanesia. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 17(5), 349-359.
- Lu, M. H. (2011, August). “Why do we need to learn English in Taiwan”: *English language ideologies in a country seeking internationalization*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 16th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics (pp. 153-160). Hong Kong, China. Retrieved from <http://www.paaljapan.org/conference2011/ProcNewest2011/pdf/oral/2D-2.pdf>

- Lucas, T., & Katz, A. (1994). Reframing the debate: The role of native languages in English-only program for language minority students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(3), 537-561.
- McCarty, T. L. (1993). Language, literacy, and the image of the child in American Indian classrooms. *Language Arts*, 70(3), 182-192.
- McKay, S. (2003). Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy: Re-examining common ELT assumptions. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(1), 1-22.
- Morrison, K., & Lui, I. (2000). Ideology, linguistic capital and the medium of instruction in Hong Kong. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 21(6), 471-486.
- Pennycook, A. (1997). Critical applied linguistics and education. In D. Corson (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (Vol. 1, pp. 23-31). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1990). There is no best method – why? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(2), 161-176.
- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (1985). Method: Approach, design, and procedure. In J. Richards (Ed.), *The context of language teaching* (pp. 16-32). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Savignon, S. J. (2003). Teaching English as communication: A global perspective. *World Englishes*, 22(1), 55-66.
- Savignon, S. J. (2007). Beyond communicative language teaching: What's ahead. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 207-220. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/KjBl6N>
- Sheen, R. (2002). "Focus on form" and "focus on forms". *ELT Journal*, 56(3), 303-305.
- Sheen, R. (2003). Focus on form – A myth in the making? *ELT Journal*, 57(3), 225-233.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2009). Orientations in ELF research: Form and function. In A. Mauranen & E. Ranta (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca: Studies and findings* (pp.37-59). Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Sievert, J. (2007). *Evaluation of structured English immersion and bilingual education on the reading skills of limited English proficient students in California and Texas*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Texas, Austin, TX. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/R4x7R6>
- Sun, C. L. (2012). *The study of the current practice on English curriculum and instruction at remote indigenous schools in Taitung County*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Taipei University of Education, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/nkZMke>
- Swain, M., & Johnson, R. K. (1997). Immersion education: A category within bilingual education. In R. K. Johnson and M. Swain (Eds), *Immersion education: International perspective* (pp. 1-16). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Taiwan Elementary and Secondary Educator Community (2014). *General Guidelines of Grade 1-9 Curriculum of Elementary and Junior High School Education*. Retrieved from http://teach.eje.edu.tw/9CC2/9cc_97.php
- Tedick, D. J., Christian, D., & Fortune, T. W. (Eds.). (2011). *Immersion Education Practices, Policies, Possibilities*. UK: Multilingual Matters. Retrieved from <https://0-ebookcentral.proquest.com.lib1.nptu.edu.tw/lib/nptu/reader.action?docID=837798>
- Tsai, T. H., & Lee, F. M. (2007). A case study: Communicative language teaching in Taiwan. *Journal of Far Eastern University, Taiwan*, 24(3), 15-37. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/w6dpSC>
- Walker, C. L., & Tedick, D. J. (2000). The complexity of immersion education: Teachers address the issues. *The Modern Language Journal*, 84(1), 5-27.

- Wallace, C. (1995). 'Reading with a suspicious eye': Critical reading in the foreign language classroom. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principles & practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 335-348). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Wang, S. C. (2009). *A qualitative study of English as a foreign language learning (EFL) by rural Taiwanese students with Christian native-English-speaking teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/950vhK>
- Wei, D. D. (2013). The implementation of English-only policy in the tertiary EFL context in Taiwan. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2(2), p.187-198. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/VcMVd4>
- Wiley, T.G., & Lukes, M. (1996). English-only and standard English ideologies in the U.S. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30(3), 511-535.
- Wu, C. Y. (2014). *Qualitative study of Taiwanese students studying abroad: Social interactions, navigating US culture, and experiences learning English language*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, thesis, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/JCcjQt>
- Yang, Y. C. (2009). *A study of elementary school English teachers' beliefs and practices in communicative language teaching*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Changhua, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/jhAcD3>
- Yang, Y. F. (2009). *The correlation of family factors to new immigrant children's English learning attitude and English learning achievement in Taoyuan County*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Taipei University of Education, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/dkLoHf>
- Yu, L. Y. (2009). *A study of the learning process for communicative language approach in an English cram school for children*. Unpublished master's thesis, Taipei Municipal University of Education, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/gNarw0>