

**Differences Between Domestic and Foreign English Teachers’
Evaluations of the “2030 Bilingual Nation” Policy**

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Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, 2022

Abstract

In 2018, the Taiwanese government announced its commitment to gradually turn Taiwan into a Chinese-English bilingual nation by year 2030. Since its introduction, the "Bilingual 2030" policy has had some degree of influence on the way English is being perceived and taught in Taiwan: expansion of bilingual education programs in schools and universities, increase in numbers of English teachers trained and employed, bilingualisation of public services, etc. The policy's broad scope and its crossdepartmental nature have already been discussed by several scholars, and various challenges were uncovered. The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore domestic English language teachers' (ELTs) opinions of the policy and contrast them with opinions of foreign English language educators residing in Kaohsiung. The data was gathered through analysis of semi-structured interviews with ELTs using the ROAD-MAPPING framework of bilingual education efficacy evaluation. Teachers' responses were then analysed and contrasted alongside three main areas: awareness of the policy's stages and goals, effectiveness of the program so far, and long-term viability of the project. The paper outlines key differences between the two groups' evaluations of "Bilingual Nation 2030", highlights gaps in understanding the policy's core goals, and discusses possible solutions aimed at improving the project's transparency and increasing the teachers' involvement in the process of turning Taiwan into a truly bilingual nation.

Keywords: Bilingual education, ROAD-MAPPING framework, English language teaching, 2030 Bilingual nation, Taiwan

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Taiwan has had a long and complex history with language education and languages in general: from conflicts between the aborigines and Portuguese-speaking settlers in the 16th century to decades of Japanese rule and, later, strict Mandarin-only policies of the 20th century, the island has gone through more than a fair share of language-related policies, laws, and orders. Recent trends of globalization, a dire need to stay competitive on the global stage, and modern geopolitical interests of the incumbent party have brought with them yet another language hurdle the Taiwan needs to overcome: an ability to speak English. The government's strides to make English a second official language date back as far as twenty years ago with Legislative Yuan in order to "reinforce the interactions between Taiwan and other countries on the world economic stage" (Legislative Yuan, 2002, 43-44). With the publication of the "Blueprint for Developing Taiwan into a Bilingual Nation by 2030" by the Taiwanese government more than three years ago, Taiwan's NDC has officially cemented its desire to make the country internationally competitive in law (National Development Council, 2018). The 23-page long document was drawn up to explain the reasoning behind drafting such a policy, to outline the project's short-term goals, and to allocate responsibilities, among other reasons (Chang, 2022). Since the initial release of the document the NDC has done a great deal of work making vaguely outlined goals reality through making progress in areas ranging from internationalization of public services to fostering local teaching talent. This comprehensive project calls for increasing numbers of not only English teachers, bilingual teachers, subject teachers in the country substantially, but also for fundamental adjustments to the way the students will be taught and prepared going forward. With that said, previous research on the subject indicates opinions of English language teaching (ELT) professionals haven't been addressed thoroughly and faithfully so far (Wanninger, 2021).

Motivation

This research aims to examine the attitudes of two different types of ELTs toward the 2030 Project: local (domestic) ELTs and foreign ELTs working in Taiwanese schools. The two groups' insights on and experiences with the Project are inherently different due to various reasons including but not limited to language barrier, degree of awareness of Taiwanese policies, involvement in national politics, channels of employment, etc. (Luo, 2014) On the other side of the spectrum, interviewing foreign English teaching professionals with actual experience of working in Taiwan has the benefit of uncovering how exactly this Policy is being evaluated by someone who's possibly coming from a country with similar policies in place (i.e. Singapore, India, Canada, etc.)

This research problem interests me as a researcher for many reasons, one of which being the fact that I've been employed as an English language teacher in Taiwan for more than a year, and I also had experience working in such capacity back in my home country in the past.

The experiences I've accumulated throughout this process have made me fascinated with the recent decision of Taiwanese president and DPP to announce the country's switch to being a bilingual English Mandarin nation in less than 12 years. [source NDC 2018] Considering the monumental, almost insurmountable amount of interdepartmental work, the government and the Ministry of Education have to do jointly in order to achieve the result they are striving for, makes the "2030 Bilingual Nation" project a perfect research direction for me as someone who has always been interested in the process of language teaching language acquisition.

Choosing this research problem and this research population in particular was a multi-step process. Limited literature on the topic was something that has forced me to switch from researching the expats attitudes towards the subject to the English language educators, both domestic and otherwise, including two different strategies so to speak. of the English language

teaching society will also help me better highlight the relevance of my research in the field of international affairs.

Research Purpose

The overall research purpose of this study is to determine what the English language teachers' levels of confidence in the Project are. Additional variable-based purposes that complement the main one include:

- Identify ELTs' degree of awareness of the Project
- Determine whether there is a policy comprehension gap between local and foreign LETs
- Determine the influence of overseas teaching experience on the LETs' confidence in the Project
- Identify key policy areas the LETs think are lacking

Research Questions

Questions posited in this study are in direct relation to the purposes above; the questions are separated into two groups: those pertaining to the entire body of LETs and those related to foreign vis-à-vis local LETs' differences in expectations for, comprehension of, and attitudes to the Project. Descriptive questions use previous research done by V. Wanninger on the topic of LET policy feedback as foundation while the comparative ones are derived directly from preliminary freeform interviews with the study's future participants.

1. How high is the level of teachers' confidence and degrees of awareness towards the Project's approach?
2. How different are the domestic and foreign teachers' experiences expectations when it comes to the Project?
3. What changes are required for the Project to move forward smoothly.

Contribution

The study is aimed to expand the wider scholar community's awareness of the "2030 Bilingual Nation" Project itself as well as whether the educators residing in Taiwan, domestic or otherwise, believe the Project is feasible or viable. The study is expected to expand the corpus of existing literature on the topic of the project through the novel approach of juxtaposing Taiwanese ELTs' perspectives against those of foreign teachers as opposed to combining them together.

Limits

Keeping in mind the fact that the interviews will be conducted during the summer season of 2022, changes made to the policy after the interviews have already been conducted and before the study's publication won't affect the findings and opinions of the respondents.

Additionally, due to limited time and resources, the number of respondents as well as their general location is restricted to Kaohsiung. Relevant Chinese-language literature (e.g. announcements from MOE, NDF, or other government agencies, publications on the topic of the Project, news articles, etc.) will not be used as literature review basis and will only serve as referential material unless necessary due to the researcher's insufficient language proficiency.

Delimits

This study doesn't aim to distinguish between different levels of policy awareness and their comparative influence on policy attitude; it also doesn't aim to further break down the

respondents into smaller age-, territory-, or background-specific groups. The ELTs' views on language-related policies other than the "2030 Bilingual Nation" are also outside the scope of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bilingual Education

Bilingual education is commonly regarded as a mix of practice and policy; and it often reflects the linguistic idiosyncrasies of a given society just as much as it reflects the government's strive towards making the country bi- or trilingual. The achievements in fields of billing location have been very well documented especially in the European region [Gabriela Reljic et al 2015] When it comes to English based bilingual education such approaches as CLIL and EMI have already been proved worldwide and the amount of research done on their effectiveness is more than sufficient. Successful models of Biledu have been introduced in Finland, Singapore, Spain, and Canada, to name a few. In the context of East Asia specifically, Sing, Japan, China, and the Philippines' bilingual education programs have been introduced with varying success [Graham, Eslami, 2019]

When instituted by a government bilingual policy can take one of two approaches, either bilingual indication for minorities or select few national groups of people to ensure unity of language across the Nation or as Nationwide policy for all the residents of the country. The former pattern of bilingual education has been used in country such as USA, Russia, and Spain, while the latter had mostly seen use in countries with a colonial past, for example, Canada, Singapore, or Cameroon. [Wanninger, 2021]. Nationwide bilingual education policies often promote the language of the colonial power as one of if not the main official language of the said country, and the language in question could be Spanish French or English. In certain parts

of the world the hitherto established official language sometimes ends up becoming the main language of communication in said nation whereas in other places it keeps its status as the official language alongside the original language inhabitants of the nation had spoken prior to policy establishment.[Dupre, J.F. 2014]

With alignment to two varieties of language policy, i.e., prescriptive and descriptive, there are two ways of how bilingual education can be introduced or can permeate into a society: top-down and bottom-up. (*Moskovsky 2014*) while teaching English has been a key part of the Taiwanese educational system for quite a long time in both private and public sectors, bilingual education by itself in its bottom-up form has been around in Taiwan's private schools specifically, and the resemblance of certain policies and guidelines listed in the Blueprint with the common practices used in such private schools highlight the government's interest in not only keeping them alive but elevating them to a national level.[source NDC 2018] Therefore experiences of students and educators in such schools studied in the past could provide perspective as to how the nationwide changes introduced in the Blueprint might affect the educational system as well as the Taiwanese students' changes in level of English competence.(*source: Graham 10*)

Compared to the aforementioned countries, Taiwan's top-down bilingual policy directives are a relatively more recent development. Taiwanese bilingual education was first introduced on a national level in some form in 2002 with the proposal by Chen Shui-bian [Tsai 2021].

On the governmental level, the next stride to commit to English as a national language

was made in 2017 when Premier Lai instructed the Ministry of Education (MOE) [*source*]. In 2018, the National Development Fund presented the “Bilingual Nation 2030” blueprint, the proposal included XX Common Strategies and XX Individual Strategies [NDC 2018].

When contextualizing bilingual education policy within the scope of Taiwan, it's important to highlight the lack of a pre-existing colonial background as grounds for choosing a foreign tongue as the second official language. Although an argument could be made for the vast influence of the USA as one of the underlying reasons for selecting English as the language of the bilingual Nation 2030 policy, the key reasons for choosing English mentioned by NDC have to do with how English is a globally recognized lingua Franca, and Taiwanese citizens being able to speak the language fluently will naturally broaden their horizons as far as business and education on a global scale; the policy is also bound to promote further international cooperation, businesses and talents from abroad coming to Taiwan, and large-scale tourism across the island. Forces of influence shaping up such a policy are covered in the language policy section of this paper.

ROAD-MAPPING

When it comes to frameworks capable to effectively explain and break down various policies and trends related to bilingual education, one of the most fitting, as well as the most comprehensive, choices is “ROAD-MAPPING”. First introduced in 2016 as an all-encompassing conceptual framework for evaluating English medium education within universities, this framework has been expanded on by its authors Emma Dafouz and Ute Smit

4 years later. [DafouzSmit16,20] The ROAD-MAPPING framework draws concepts derived in eco-linguistics, social linguistics, and language policy research and breaks them down along six different dimensions United under the concept of discourse. [Source Dafouz Smit 2020]. Within the framework the term 'discourse' does not simply represent language in use or language in context, instead, it's portrayed as a building block used in shaping social order, forming policies, and commanding interpersonal communication. Being one of the main means of affecting interaction, discourse plays an integral role within the university context, and the framework's six dimensions invariably rely on it when highlighting English medium education's multi-disciplinary effects and its broad influence not only on the communication within a classroom, but on the education as a whole.

Six Dimensions

The first of the six aforementioned dimensions of the framework is **Roles of English** (RO). English, other than being the language specifically taught within a classroom, often takes up a variety of other roles both inside and outside a teaching environment: be it dissemination of scientific ideas within the University or between universities, translation and promotion of educational policies, rules of behavior within a classroom as well as a yardstick of measuring how capable a student is when introduced to a multilingual environment (source: DafouzSmit2016). In The Smit-Dafouz seminal work, the dimension of rules of English is further broken down to include four factors: societal, institutional, pedagogical,

communicational.

When putting the framework in the context of Taiwanese schools, it's important to notice that the two main languages within most classrooms are English and Chinese, although other languages like Taiwanese or Hakka are indubitably relevant in the school setting and society as a whole. In that regard, when examined from a societal perspective, the English language in Taiwan presently acts mainly the go-to second language within a school setting as well as an auxiliary language within organizations and establishments aimed at international cooperation, business, or tourism. In regards to the institutional factor, although English takes up a substantially more important role in tertiary education (especially in universities with sizeable international student bodies), Taiwanese schools commonly organize English corners, introduce bilingual science, arts, or PE classes, promote interaction with sister schools abroad, and, in case NESTs are employed, provide educational and administrative materials in both Chinese and English. (Luo, 2014) On the pedagogical front, an ability to speak English at a certain level and a passed GEPT-Intermediate exam is a baseline expectation when it comes to high school graduates. Additionally, English is also used as the language of instruction in English class in accordance to the TEIE approach widely promoted by the Policy. [source: 5?] Finally, the communicational factor describes English's main purposes and its frequency of use alongside or instead of other languages, which in a typical Taiwanese schools' case is mostly limited to language of instruction, subject of study, and medium of in-class communication within CLIL- or TEIE-based classrooms.

The second dimension of the framework is titled **Academic Disciplines** [AD], which in a wider tertiary education sense represents the multiplicity of academic and non-academic areas and cultures, in its adaptation for the primary and secondary education context ends up representing the cross-disciplinary nature of English (or is meant to, according to the NDC's guidelines). [Graham, 2019]

Seeing as how the main focus of this paper is on a language policy and opinions towards it from English teachers of varying backgrounds, the dimension of (language) Management has been made an integral part of the study, and ELT's opinions have not only been juxtaposed against each other but also against a wider backdrop of the blueprint itself vis-a-vis its implementation. In that regard, the precise definition of "M" in "ROAD-MAPPING" has been taken to stand for "direct efforts to manipulate the language situation" [Spolsky, 2004]

Language **Management**, represented via letter [M] within the Framework, deals with various top-down policies, be they state- or school-wide, and ways in which they influence the process of education. To quote Bernard Spolsky, these policies are "direct efforts to manipulate the language situation." [Spolsky, 2004]. The main document insofar as management of bilingual education in Taiwan are "Bilingual Nation 2030" and "Bilingual 2030", the broad guidelines of which are filled in with additional lower-level policies regulating content, approaches to teaching, quality and experience of personnel, disciplines taught in English, etc. [NDC 2021].

Within the scope of the current study, two of the three aspects of (language) management

were highlighted, with one of them having been subdivided into four sub-parts: “policy type” and “communicational functions”. The third aspect of [M], namely, “language targeted” is covered under [RO] and [ING]. Within Smit and Dafouz’s Framework, David C. Johnson’s four binary criteria were used to delineate between various regulatory texts: “genesis”, “means vs ends”, “legal status”, and “documentation”. Under this gradation, the Blueprint can be characterized as top-down (the policy is promulgated by the government via MOE and NDC), overt (the aims are stated openly), de jure (the policy is an official National Development Plan), and implicit (the Blueprint features recommendations and a few goalposts), although the following “Bilingual 2030” introduced by NDC takes up a more explicit approach. (DafouzSmit 2020, Johnson 2013]

The second aspect of language management has to do with various functions English plays insofar as communication, i.e., whether (and if yes, then how) it’s used within administrative policies or between teaching staff in schools, whether teachers and students are instructed to use it (or refrain from using it) in certain situations, etc.

The dimension of “**Agents**” represents various stakeholders involved in the educational process directly or otherwise, i.e., teachers, students, parents, administrative staff, and politicians or policymakers. The original framework, seeing as how it was designed for EMEMUS, features a thorough breakdown of actors involved with bilingual education, with additional emphasis on the distinction between micro- and macro-actors. Within Graham’s adjusted framework, however, the most attention is given to teachers — ...

It's important to highlight the presence of another agent in various Blueprint-related studies: the policymaker, and the juxtaposition between the two. Oftentimes, teachers, especially NESTs, are forced to go against the de jure guidelines promoted by the school or university they're employed at and organize the educational process differently in order to achieve teaching goals established within the Blueprint.

The next dimension of the Framework is [PP] — **Practices and Processes**. When defined by Smit and Dafouz, it is taken to describe the multiplicity of cultural conceptions of theories and practices employed in (bilingual) teaching (with particular focus on the process vis-a-vis the product). Additionally, their diversity is highlighted via the micro- / macro-level and formal/informal distinctions. Bilingual teaching practices commonly seen in Taiwanese schools have been studied in-depth by multiple authors in the past, and in a few cases also contextualized within NESTs' own experiences. The key findings of such papers often feature difficulty to adapt, a struggle to achieve student understanding, and issues with (lack of) student interaction. The current paper aims to analyze the processes taking place within a school setting through a prism of top-down change and gradual increase of the English language's influence on the students' educational outcomes. Another feature that's considered integral to this dimension of the framework is Teacher Professional Development — an ongoing process aimed at gradually enhancing teachers' levels of professionalism. According to Wanninger [2021], when it comes to Taiwanese ELTs, skills in the target language (i.e. English) and subject-based knowledge form the core of the educators' knowledge base. Although less

prevalent in a school setting, the challenge of balancing content and language teaching plays a key role in shaping EMI classes at university level.

Last comes the dimension of **Internationalization and Glocalization** [ING] which represents the dichotomy of global and local influences on bilingual education. While the meaning of the term “internationalization” is clear, “glocalization”, on the other hand, perhaps requires definition. Using the commonly employed tactic of juxtaposing it against “globalization”, it is commonly taken to mean introduction of changes into global or internationalized (business / educational) models so as to fit in with local norms and customs. Under this definition, the main distinction, therefore, lies between global and local drivers of change, but an argument needs to be made for source of change: namely, regulators and the government vis-a-vis the teaching body of a given school. Smit and Dafouz repeatedly emphasize the active role tertiary education institutions play in terms of internationalizing educational environments, initiating exchange programs, and attracting foreign students, whereas primary and secondary education institutions typically pursue no such aims. As mentioned by Graham, despite the aforementioned discrepancy, the Taiwanese government’s continuous devotion to secondary education internationalization makes this framework dimension quite relevant insofar as bilingual education policy analysis, and cannot be understated. In a similar fashion to the Japanese government’s aims in promoting and supporting EMI on a national level, International competitiveness is often highlighted in the Blueprint. When observed and analyzed through the ROAD-MAPPING framework’s [ING]

dimension, EMI in Japan faces similar challenges and features the local vs global dichotomy quite prominently as well [Bradford & Brown 2018].

METHODOLOGY

In order to gather the needed empirical data and answer research questions listed in the Introduction section of this paper, semi-structured interviews were hosted with the participation of ten ELTs of Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese nationalities teaching English in schools within Kaohsiung City. The choice of interviewees was made in order to build upon previous research conducted by Wanniger, Wang, and Graham as well as to address the gap of knowledge in scholarly literature in regards to foreign ELTs' views on bilingual education in the context of the post-policy Taiwan. Qualitative research methods were used throughout the study in order to obtain in-depth perspectives as well as uncover key insights that would otherwise been lost were the researcher to use quantitative methods instead. Additionally, due to discrepancies in ELTs' and NESTs' depths of understanding and degrees of awareness of the policy, quantitative methods were deemed incapable of producing an effective comparison between the two groups of teachers.

From the process of selecting interviewees, convenience sampling was used to contact domestic ELTs and conduct the initial interviews. Further, snowball sampling was employed to find a sufficient number of foreign ELTs willing to participate in the study. The area of Kaohsiung City was chosen because of convenience, abundance of primary and secondary education institutions employing foreign teachers, and a pre-established network of contacts. A certain degree of variation sampling was achieved through interviewing teachers employed in schools of with widely different numbers of students, which affected degree of access to

resources. Foreign interviewees hailed from a variety of English-speaking countries including the USA and Tuvalu.

When it comes to domestic ELTs, as far as educational background, the five interviewees involved in the study all had at least a master's degree in Education or English, with widely varying levels of teaching experience (from 5 to 19 years). All five educators have completed their teacher education in a Taiwanese University either as part of their bachelor's degree studies or within their master's degree curriculum, which was taught in Chinese, and one of the teachers has also completed TESOL certification. Two teachers had previous working experience in a different school, while for the other three, the school they were employed by at the time of study was their first. All the Taiwanese ELTs were Junior high School level teachers, i.e., they teach English to students of grades 7, 8, or 9. In addition to their teaching duties, two of the interviewees had other concurrent posts — they were responsible for academic affairs and consultation, respectively. None of the domestic ELTs had experienced teaching and entire course fully in English — Chinese was used as either the main language or a tool for clarification during the English language classes taught. Out of the five foreign English language teachers interviewed throughout the study, two had completed a bachelor's degree and three a master's degree, with two of the respondents having experienced tertiary education in Taiwan. Number of years teaching English in Taiwan varied between 1 and 3 years, with none having experienced teaching English outside of Taiwan.

Similarly, foreign respondents were also employed in Kaohsiung's middle schools except

for one teacher currently working in a primary school with 6th-graders. In case of all the five foreign teachers, teacher training was conducted fully in English either as part of their University curriculum or as a mandatory course during the months of attending the Fulbright program [link to website]. When it comes to the duties fulfilled by the five foreign teachers, all five mentioned having to occasionally assist subject teachers in conducting bilingual classes alongside the usual English classes taught through either CLIL or TEIE in a pair with a local ELT.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually in a one-on-one online setting. Before the interviews began, the respondents were introduced to the scope of the study, the general direction of topics discussed during the interview, and introduced to their rights as participants of the study. All the participants gave their consent to be recorded and their speech to be transcribed before the interview. Every interview session started with a few minutes of small talk and, not until the researcher notified the interviewee of the start of recording, would the interview itself begin. In order not to impose any pressure on the respondents, every participant of the study was notified the interviews could be stopped at any point with no conditions or consequences.

As stated in the Chinese cover letter for the current study, the interviews were to be mainly conducted in English, although Chinese was used by local teachers at times for clarification

purposes or as means of describing a concept they were only familiar with the Chinese term for.

The interviews lasted around 45 minutes on average, with 30 to 35 minutes being the mean duration of the interview part itself. As times, in order to provide background information, the author would momentarily pause the interview to disclose additional information pertaining to the “Bilingual Nation 2030” policy. Although most of the interviewees chose to keep their webcam turned on throughout the course of the interview, elements of nonverbal communication such as body language were not analyzed as part of the study.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The interview guide used for semi-structured interviews was designed with the ROAD-MAPPING framework for evaluating bilingual education in mind [DafouzSmit2020]. The framework as seen adjusted for use and a pre-tertiary context by Graham, served as an anchor point of sorts to ensure thorough coverage of the dimensions of English bilingual education established as relevant in the Literature Review stage of this study.

Research questions of this study were designed to be reliably answerable through the process of interviewing the aforementioned respondents and, further, comparing insights gained from the two juxtaposed cohorts of domestic and foreign ELTs. Alignment of research questions with relevant dimensions of the road-mapping framework allowed for creation of comprehensive questions capable of addressing multi-dimensional issues of language policy feedback and quality of bilingual education approaches promulgated by the government.

DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data pertaining to the “Bilingual Nation 2030” policy feedback/expectations and bilingual education were collected from text-based transcripts obtained throughout the interviews conducted online through Google meet with assistance of bespoke transcription software. A few notes were added post-factum from the researchers’ memory to fill in gaps not automatically picked up by the transcribing app. Following the process of transcript cleanup and additional translation of Chinese terms used throughout the interviews, the transcripts were coded in multiple stages. Qualitative data analysis was then employed to reveal the meanings behind the answers (Tsech 1990). In order to make the study outcomes less reliant on the researcher’s own understanding of the Policy, analytical pattern coding was employed to combine phrases and sentences bearing similar meanings into categories aligned with the four chosen dimensions of the Framework.

Findings

Research Question 1: How high is the level of teachers’ awareness of and confidence towards the Policy? Analysis of data revealed an overall lack of understanding of the “Bilingual Nation 2030” policy’s multi-departmental approach. Apart from a few key insights that echoed through the majority of the respondents answers, the researcher has noted a gap of knowledge pertaining to the policies timeline and non-education-related aims. [Quote] additionally systematic misunderstanding of the title of the policy in and of itself was noted. These findings were in alignment with results of research conducted by Wanniger in 2021. The majority of

the interviewees mistakenly assumed, at least in the very beginning of getting acquainted with the policy, that the overarching theme of The Blueprint is to make Taiwan's population fully bilingual, which was then met with a degree of apprehension. Oftentimes, unless the teachers participated in multiple seminars devoted to the blueprint discussion, confusion in regards to what the policy is trying to achieve was common. Domestic lets did show awareness of original attempts at bilingualization of education previously attempted in Taiwan, e.g. the [10-year] plan of previous mayor of Tainan City Lai Ching-te of transforming the city's linguistic landscape into a bilingual one foreign LETs the majority of whom are affiliated with the Fulbright program, through their attendance of Fulbright-sponsored seminars and conferences, seem to have a service level understanding of the policies objectives, although the respondents remained sceptical as to whether the aims of Policy are feasibly achievable in the span of 8 years.

In the process of interviewing foreign LETs a common theme amongst the non-Taiwanese respondents was established: the teachers subjective experiences obtained through the process of interaction with fellow teachers students, and Taiwanese people in general throughout their stay in Taiwan had affected their perception of the policies feasibility considerably. That is to say, the perception of their interlocutors' English language proficiency, or, in certain cases, established a certain perspective towards bilingual education that they would otherwise not have had. The way the Taiwanese people communicated with the respondents in the past affected their perception of the policy right now, and, more

importantly, its future prospects.

Whereas the foreign English language teachers internal evaluation of the policy is mainly based on their experiences obtained through living in Taiwan and teaching in schools in an English- language medium, domestic LETs are more likely to infer the likelihood of a policies success from regulations and changes introduced by the school's management as well as effectiveness of new types of classes introduced as a consequence of promulgation of the blueprint. [quote:TW1] new knowledge obtained from participation in seminars and workshops organized as a result of the policies spread in Kaohsiung have largely been related to teaching strategies as opposed to clarification of the policies stages.[TW1, TW2]

Additional reasons for such opinions being formed by English language teachers of Taiwan can be inferred from their answers towards the question of justification for policy's implementation (Interview Guide, Q3.1.3). In alignment with the overall reasoning and key factors for introduction of blueprint, multiple respondents listed political and economic reasons. [NDC, 2018] [T4,F2], F5 another key insight, although somewhat politically charged, was the assumption that Taiwan's incumbent regime is attempting to establish closer ties with the US government [T1 T5]. The aim of strengthening the tourism industry was not explicitly mentioned by domestic LETs, although it was a major part of the blueprint. [NDC, 2018]

Research Question 2: How different are the domestic and foreign ELTs' experiences & evaluations when it comes to the Policy?

Foreign LETs employed in schools throughout Taiwan, by nature of their employment, are an

integral part of the Policy's solutions in and of themselves, which makes their experiences categorically different from that of local LETs [NDC, 2021]. With that in mind, it is important to analyze Taiwanese LETs' experiences through the prism of change introduced as a result (or an intended outcome) of the Policy. All the local LETs mentioned the amount of work and the Spectra of duties they are expected to undertake had increased since the policies introduction and active promulgation of it in Kaohsiung City. [QuotesT1-T5]. One of the more common newly introduced responsibilities mentioned was the need for the domestic LET to work alongside a subject teacher in order to either design or jointly conduct a bilingual class in a subject. [Quote T1 arts T5 biology]. In case of foreign LETs however this was not a newly introduced requirement, but rather a prerequisite for working in the school they were employed at in the first place. The number of such classes could vary from half to 100% of classes taught in the school the LET was employed at. Teacher professional development courses and workshops, especially those hosted by the Fulbright Foundation, would also include lectures on how to effectively implement CLIL when teaching a subject in English [Quote:F3,4].

Opinions of the two groups of teachers on roles of English in a school setting were noticeably different, especially between local LETs employed in schools without a full-time foreign teacher vis-a-vis foreign LETs employed full-time. [Quote T1 vs F2,5] while both groups have admitted English as somewhat relevant outside of classroom setting, most local LETs hadn't found the basis for saying the language's roles have expanded since the Policy's implementation. In their mind, English remained an academic subject first and foremost, with

the exception of TEIE classes, where it acted both as the subject and the medium. In all the foreign LETs eyes, on the other hand, english's role hadn't just been that of a subject but also a medium of interpersonal communication between foreign LETs and students, as well as co-teachers, subject teachers, and administration staff [F1,F2,F3]. One respondent also noted that, at least in his presence, English was used as medium of communication between two other Taiwanese English language teachers on multiple occasions and non-classroom scenario. [F4] Insights on roles of English teachers going forward did not see major discrepancies between the two research cohorts. An expected expansion of roles of domestic as well as foreign LETs from just English teachers to CLIL-based educators was quoted on both sides. Multiple domestic LETs also mentioned the eventual broadening of responsibilities subject teachers would have to go through in the future: [T4,5].

Opinions of the two groups of teachers on what kind of impact they exert on the shaping of the policy also aligned, with domestic LETs demonstrating a more pessimistic view in general.

[T1,F3] Whether it's the top down nature of the blueprint, direct involvement of multiple ministries in its drafting, or the fact that many policies the blueprint was based on originated in cities other than Kaohsiung, i.e., Tainan and Taipei, the outcome is clear: [source NDC 2021] both groups of teachers agree that their opinions and actions do not bear significant impact on the Policy's proceedings. The way one of the teachers (jokingly) referred to the NDC as "the Big Brother" supports that conclusion.

When asked whether the policy is holding up well so far, domestic LETs showed varying

attitudes with different degrees of confidence, while the attitude of foreign LETs could be described as “cautiously optimistic.” T1 and T4 have expressed the sentiment that the policy is not too successful in their school, and the reasons listed were lack of readiness on behalf of teachers and comparatively low English language proficiency level of students. On the topic of subject teachers using English T1 said: “I don’t think they’re ready, and most of them cannot use English to teach their subject effectively.” T2 provided this point of view: “as a Taiwanese, I think most of them are afraid to speak English in front of students.” Another keyword that was included in multiple responses to this question was “motivation”, specifically English teachers’ motivation in continuously attempting to use English in a classroom setting despite the aforementioned challenges (T1,F1,F3). Keeping in mind the fact that the foreign LETs views on the current proceedings of the policy were mostly influenced by workshops and second-hand experiences obtained through engaging in academic conversations with other educators, the overall tone when discussing the policies current achievements was more positive in general.

T1 and T5’s positive evaluation of the current state of the policy was also influenced by increased availability of english-based educational resources as well as comparative ease of access to government websites and documents written in English compared to the past. It’s important to notice that while not being a part of bilingual education, those insights nevertheless show that the policy is multi-dimensional in its nature, and different dimensions all have acertain amount of success, albeit such views are closely related to personal

experiences and not the general state of affairs perceived by all the employees of the educational industry.

Research Question 3: What changes are required for the Policy to move forward smoothly?

Opinions and insights provided by the two cohorts of interviewees varied in their nature and intensity, ranging from suggestions to qualms. Multiple domestic LETs mentioned the aging teacher population as one of the reasons behind insufficient speed of change and, therefore, inability of the teaching staff to adapt to new approaches such as CLIL or TEIE(T3,4). Indeed, according to the Blueprint, English teachers should be able to use TEIE (source: NDC 2018).

T1, when discussing the eventual retirement of the current staff, mentioned that “the new teachers will be required to pass English examination, they [will] need to achieve some kind of goal.” Another suggestion was to turn the current policy “into a rule or [a] regulation” in order to force domestic LETs to adapt to the new ways of engaging in bilingual education. This comment showcases the implicit nature of the blueprint, as discussed in the Framework section of the current study. A common issue that was addressed by three of the foreign language teachers participating in the study was widely different levels of English proficiency within a single class.

This became an obstacle in establishing an English-speaking environment, which, in turn, resulted in underwhelming results insofar as English language related achievements of a few classes these teachers had taught at (F1,4,5). This comment was echoed by the domestic

LETs in that they suggested raising the overall English language level of the students before engaging in fully integrated CLIL classes (T4,5).

Despite the apparent lack of understanding of the policy's inner workings, as showcased by the teacher's answers presented under RQ1, LETs did not name increase in frequency of hosting seminars as one of the ways to improve the policy going forward, although a suggestion to use mass media outlets for additional policy promotion was presented as one of the solutions (F2).

The main feedback received by the researcher was related to specific adjustments that could be made to Taiwan's educational system in general or the bilingual education in specific, and the changes suggested had to do with students, the teaching staff, and the administration staff.

Limitations and Conclusion

Throughout the introduction and implementation of the “2030 Bilingual Nation” policy, agents involved in education face various challenges at every level from personal (teachers doubt their teaching abilities) all the way to national (GEPT grades aren’t improving as fast as originally predicted). The researcher hopes this study will encourage dialogue in regards to inherent differences between various agents involved in bilingual education and which measures have to be undertaken in order to improve the bilingual policy’s overall effectiveness and improve teaching outcomes of courses taught partially or entirely in English. First, it’s important to note the region limitations: Kaohsiung City is somewhat specific in the scope and approach to bilingual education, lagging behind Taipei, Xinbei, or Tainan, but being an important educational center, nevertheless. Therefore, this study’s insights have their own specificity and are not necessarily directly comparable to experiences of teachers in other cities of Taiwan. Second, the teachers participating in the study were quite different insofar as teaching and academic backgrounds, meaning that many variables were involved in the study. It is recommended that future studies limit their sampling to one group (e.g., secondary content teachers) to allow deeper insights to be drawn. Third, due to cultural differences and inherent attitudes towards education, the opinions of local LETs could not necessarily be aligned with foreign LETs opinions effectively. The fact that this study featured foreign teachers employed in schools (NESTs as well as LETs) provides novel insights into teaching outcomes, nevertheless.

Cooperation of local and foreign LETs, when organized effectively, imbues students with not only language ability, but also priceless cultural insights, not to mention constant listening practice. Such a process, assuming comprehensive support and well-oiled teaching techniques, is bound to help Taiwan achieve its bilingual goals more easily. That said, without proper adjustment, well-established information channels, and sufficient teacher training, bilingual education's quality suffers drastically, undermining the National Development Council's ultimate goal of turning Taiwan into an English-speaking country.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide

1. Basic Information

- a. Name _____
- b. School/Organization _____
- c. Title/Position _____
- d. Interviewer _____
- e. Date of Interview ____ / ____ / ____

2. Professional Teaching Background

- What was your major?
- How many years of Teacher Education have you completed?
- How long have you been teaching for?
- Is the school you're currently employed at your first?
- What level of students are you currently teaching?
- Was your teacher training in taught English? If not, what language was it?
- Have you ever taught an entire course fully in English?

3. Policy awareness [A, M]

- How much do you know about the "Bilingual Nation 2030" policy in general?
 - Have you consumed any policy-related material so far (e.g., books, newspaper articles, educational videos, lectures, etc.)?
 - Are you aware of the goals, benchmarks, or the roadmap of the policy?
 - What do you think is the justification for implementing the policy?
- Have you ever participated in events, seminars, or workshops dedicated to promotion of

the policy? If so, what have you learned? If not, any reason why?

4. Policy viability [M]

- Has the policy held up well so far?
- What changes around English education and bilingualization of Taiwan have you noticed so far? Can they be attributed to the policy?
 - Could you share your thoughts on what the NDC has done well with the policy? What, if any, are some of the NDC's measures' shortcomings?
 - Do you think NDC is implementing the policy well?
 - Judging from the current developments, how likely is the policy to succeed long-term, in your opinion?
- Keeping the policy's intentions in mind, what do you think about your future employment prospects?

5. Roles of English [RO]

- Has English started playing a bigger role in the school setting in general?
- Did you have to go through evaluations to confirm your English language certification?

6. A teacher's role [RO, A]

- How big of an impact do you think English teachers' opinions and experiences play in shaping/proceeding with the policy?
- How will an English teacher's role in the Taiwanese educational system change in the future?
- How will the roles of domestic/foreign English teachers change in the future?

7. Policy and educational staff [M, PP]

Have you felt like you have been assigned more work since the policy's implementation?

Have you felt like you have participated in more non-teaching-related activities like attending workshops or getting acquainted with bilingual education literature since?

Have you cooperated with subject teachers since the policy's been implemented? Please describe your experience.

Have you ever worked alongside a foreign English teacher before? If yes, how was it?

or

Have you had to work alongside a domestic English teacher before? What about a subject teacher? Please describe the experience.

8. Conclusion

From the perspective of an experienced teacher, what are some of the changes/suggestions/critiques you can provide as far as the policy's progression?

Is there anything you'd like to add?

English Cover Letter

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for reading this invitation. I am a bachelor's degree student at Wenzao University who is conducting interviews as a part of a research study regarding "Bilingual Nation 2030". The study aims to analyze Kaohsiung schools' English teachers' feedback and thoughts towards implementation of that governmental policy. Your first-hand information on the state of bilingual education and your professional views are not only valuable for this research but also for the further planning of the policy; therefore, I would like to invite you to share your thoughts about the policy as a secondary school teacher. The interview will be conducted online, and it will last around 30 minutes; you may also choose to meet offline. Participation is fully voluntary, and you will be able to freely drop out at any time. The responses that reveal personal information will be kept confidential; the data will be codified and your personal identity will not be disclosed. The researcher will be the only person with access to all the gathered information, and the final study will only enclose the interview's essentials in text form. If you are willing to participate, please message me back so we could find a time that is convenient for you. Your participation is highly appreciated.

Thank you again for your time!

Best regards,

Sergei Belousov

Chinese Cover Letter

敬愛的教師，您好！

感謝您願意閱讀這封邀請信。我是文藻外語大學的國際事務系學生Sergei，正在對於「雙語國家2030」政策進行研究，想要了解您針對該政策的目標、機構、成就等細節的理解和評估。您的一手經驗及教育專業有助於這項研究及整體的雙語政策的執行，因此想邀請教師以中等學校教師的角度分享您的相關經驗與看法。本次的訪談將在線上進行，歷時約30分鐘，您可以選擇線下見面參與實體訪談。訪談中用的語言以英文為主，教師歡迎隨時使用中文來補充或更深入表達意見。是否參與訪談完全尊重個人意願，不論任何原因，您隨時都可以自由退出。為了確保個人隱私，訪談過程中一切涉及個人隱私的資料及參與者的真實身分將被保密，受訪者的名字最終將以代碼及編號呈現，蒐集到的資料也將被安全地被保存。除了我之外，沒有別人能夠取得您所提供的資料，報告中也只會顯示必要的資訊，以不透露個人隱私為主。如果您願意參與這次的研究，請反應給我訊息，將可安排對您最方便的訪談時間。

非常感謝您的參與！再次感謝您的願意花寶貴的時間！祝教安！

大學生Sergei Belousov敬上