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## **RESEARCH ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN TAIWAN'S HIGH SCHOOLS**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to explore the current status of bilingual education implementation in high schools in Taiwan. This study formulated interview topics based on different aspects of bilingual education and interviewed six relevant personnel through the literature analysis and qualitative in high schools. It included principals, teachers and students in order to understand the impact of bilingualism on the influencing factors and implementation difficulties. The conclusions drawn are*

*as follows: First. Bilingual education policies and supporting measures will affect the progress and implementation effectiveness of bilingual education. second. It is helpful for schools to set clear bilingual education goals. third. There are differences in the effectiveness of bilingual education for students in general high schools and technical high schools. Fourth. The preparation of bilingual teachers and the community are the key to the success of bilingual education. fifth. Creating an immersive learning environment can improve the effectiveness of bilingual teaching. sixth. The urban-rural gap and insufficient resources are major obstacles to promote bilingual education. seventh. If teacher spend too much time on teaching English, it will affect students 'acquisition of professional subject knowledge. eighth. Bilingual teaching causes burden on teachers and affects their willingness to promote it.*

**Keywords:**

Bilingual Education, General High School, Technical High School, Bilingual Policy.

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## **1. Introduction**

Facing the era of globalization, countries around the world are in a relationship of both competition and cooperation. Communication is a necessary channel, and improving English skills has become an important task. When Dean Lai of the Executive Yuan accepted an exclusive interview with the media in August 2018, he instructed to formally promote bilingual education starting in 2019, hoping to make Taiwan more internationally competitive through bilingual national policies (Executive Yuan, 2018).

### **1.1. Research Motivation**

The Ministry of Education has instructed that in order to promote our country's economic development, we will make bilingual countries a policy promotion goal and gradually move towards English as the official language (Executive Yuan, 2018). From the above literature, we can know the importance of bilingual education. The researcher is studying in the Department of Foreign Languages and has a strong interest in high school English teaching. Hopes to explore the current situation and difficulties of promoting bilingual teaching in high schools through literature analysis and interviews with relevant high school education personnel. The results can not only be used as a reference for educators, but also as a direction for future efforts in bilingual teaching.

## **1.2. Research Purposes**

The Executive Yuan has formulated a blueprint for bilingual development to achieve the two major policy goals of enhancing the English proficiency of the Chinese people and enhancing the country's competitiveness (Executive Yuan, 2018). It can be seen that the English ability of Chinese people is closely related to national competitiveness. Therefore, this study aims to explore the influencing factors and implementation difficulties of bilingual education to achieve the following purposes:

**1.2.1.** Discuss bilingual education policies and promotion directions, and provide school teaching references.

**1.2.2.** Establish the implementation purpose and expected benefits of bilingual education as the implementation direction of bilingual teaching.

**1.2.3.** Compare the differences in bilingual learning between general high school and technical high students.

**1.2.4.** Explore the influencing factors of the implementation effectiveness of bilingual teaching in high schools.

**1.2.5.** Find out the difficulties in implementing bilingual education and propose solutions.

## **2. Literature Discussion**

### **2.1. The Connotation of Bilingual Education**

To put it simply, bilingual teaching is teaching through two languages, one is the mother tongue, and the other is the language we want to learn. If bilingual teaching is to be done well, the focus is on cross-field teachers preparing lessons together, and bilingual teachers can form a community in the future. (Zou Wen-li, 2021). In Taiwan's bilingual education, bilingualism refers to Chinese and English, that is, mixed teaching of Chinese and English is used in the classroom. In addition to learning the knowledge of the subject, students can also increase their time learning English to improve their English ability. In addition to being able to conduct courses in English, bilingual teachers must also be familiar with subject-related knowledge so that students can learn English communication and expression skills while learning subject content, promoting multicultural understanding and international literacy (Hong Yue-nv, 2021). It is best for teachers to form a bilingual community to discuss the proportion of teaching time in Chinese and English, and to take into account both professional knowledge and English learning.

## **2.2. The Dilemma of Bilingual Education**

At present, the training of bilingual teachers is not effective, and there are not many suitable bilingual teaching materials, which may cause the learning gap of students to increase, If a dedicated unit is not set up to promote bilingual education, it will be difficult to go forward in the long run (Ye Ruo-lan, 2021). Students lack a bilingual learning environment, and rural schools lack teachers, making it difficult to hire English teachers, resulting in difficulties in the implementation of bilingual education (Luo Guo-ji, 2022). Regarding the policy of bilingual education, people from all walks of life have different opinions, but the shortage of bilingual teachers is the primary problem to be solved. Secondly, a dedicated unit should be established to promote bilingual teaching, plan comprehensive bilingual courses and teaching materials, and allocate sufficient funds to solve the problem.

## **2.3. Strategies for bilingual education**

In addition to the improvement of teachers' teaching abilities, the proper use of digital technology for smart learning is also an effective way to improve the effectiveness of bilingual education, with the assistance of information technology, we can create a high-quality bilingual education environment and cultivate global talents (Yang Ya-fei, 2021). Bilingual teaching focuses first on effective communication in the teaching situation, and the effect on the teaching site is the real success factor (Li Cui-yu, 2022). Things that need to be improved in the cultivation of bilingual teachers include expanding teachers' on-the-job training, adjust the training courses for bilingual teachers, and introducing foreign teacher human resources (Wu Xiao-xia, 2022). From the above literature, we know that making good use of information technology to assist bilingual teaching can greatly improve students' learning effectiveness; in addition, building a situational environment to immerse students in it can help develop communication and expression skills; When conducting bilingual teaching, both subject knowledge and English teaching should be considered, and attention should be paid to the proportion of Chinese and English teaching so that students can acquire subject knowledge and improve their English skills.

## **3. Research Methods**

This study adopted the qualitative interview method. According to the research purpose, the interview topic outline of this study was formulated. The topics were divided into four questions, and interviews with high school principals, teachers and students (Including a total of six

interviewees from general high schools and technical high schools, the interviewees were coded according to their positions, P is the principal, T is the teacher, and S is the student.) to explore the influencing factors and difficulties in the implementation of bilingual teaching in high schools.

• **Interview Topic 1** The National Development Committee of the Executive Yuan plans the 2030 bilingual country policy development blueprint and actively to promote bilingual education, please elaborate on your understanding of bilingual education policy and your attitude towards the policy?

• **Interview Topic 2** Considering the differences in the curriculum, teaching and students' English proficiency between general high schools and technical high schools, are there any differences in students' learning?

• **Interview Topic 3** Based on your experience in the education field, what factors do you think influence the effectiveness of bilingual education implementation?

• **Interview Topic 4** What difficulties do you think there are in implementing bilingual teaching.

#### **4. Analysis of research results**

Based on the above interview topics, people from different fields were invited to be interviewed to understand their insights and opinions on the implementation of bilingual education. The results are summarized as follows:

##### **4.1. Clear bilingual education policies and goals will help the progress of bilingual education.**

Tainan City's bilingual education in primary and secondary schools is currently being fully promoted in line with central policies. It is hoped that through the support of the administrative system, the professional development of bilingual teachers, the establishment of bilingual learning environments, and bilingual teaching and learning guidelines, we can plan to promote and achieve bilingualism in all schools (Zheng Xin-hui, Zeng Zi-qi, 2022). Analysis of the interview data revealed that the government's bilingual education policy and the school's bilingual education goals will affect the implementation of bilingual teaching, the relevant views are as follows:

- *The government should invite experts and scholars to form a bilingual education development committee and refer to the excellent bilingual achievements abroad. establish good national policies and consider the current educational situation in the country, formulate clear and feasible bilingual education policies, and Only with good supporting*

*measures and adequate resources and funding can bilingual education be effectively promoted.(P011005001)*

- *The school principal should invite relevant teachers to form a bilingual teaching development committee to formulate clear bilingual policies, teaching objectives, timely review of effectiveness and improvement of deficiencies.(P021006001)*
- *Only with clear bilingual education policies and bilingual teaching goals can teachers have a clear direction for bilingual teaching, only in this way can it be effective and not become superficial and perfunctory.(T011007001)*
- *In order to improve the English proficiency of the Chinese people, the government promotes a bilingual education policy, the intention is good, but in the process of promotion, At this time, the government should help solve various difficulties and problems in the teaching field and provide teachers with the resources needed for teaching.(T021008001)*

#### **4.2. There are Differences in the Implementation Effectiveness of Bilingual Education between General High Schools and Technical High Schools.**

For technical and vocational students, the foundation of English may not be solid enough, and teachers must teach step by step, otherwise it will have a negative effect on students and reduce the acceptance of professional knowledge by technical and vocational students (Xu Zu-jia, 2021).

Analysis of the interview data revealed that there are some differences in bilingual teaching and student learning between general high schools and technical high schools. The relevant views are as follows:

- *General high school students have more English teaching hours per week, and most of their English proficiency is above a certain level, when bilingual teaching is conducted on general subjects, students and teachers interact well, and bilingual teaching has good results. (T011007002)*
- *Technical high school students have less time for English classes every week, their English foundation is less solid, and they spend a lot of time, In terms of professional subjects and practical implementation, when bilingual teaching of general subjects is implemented, student acceptance lower, less effective. (T021008002)*
- *I feel that when I take bilingual courses, i can not only learn the knowledge of the subject, but also learn more English. The time spent can improve my English ability and communication skills, the bilingual course is a good course. (S011011002)*

- *I feel that in bilingual classes, i can't understand most of the English lectures, which is a waste of time, and I think it will affect the learning of my professional knowledge.*  
(S021012002)

#### **4.3. Bilingual Teachers, Community Composition And Learning Environment Are The Main Influencing Factors Of The Effectiveness Of Bilingual Education.**

Schools promote bilingual courses and must effectively improve teachers' bilingual teaching capabilities and optimize the bilingual and digital technology learning environment so that students can apply the English they have learned in life (Lin Zhi-cheng, 2021). Through interviews, it was discovered that the training of bilingual teachers, the functions of bilingual communities, and the construction of bilingual environment equipment are significantly related to the effectiveness of bilingual teaching. The relevant views are as follows:

- *The promotion of bilingual teaching must be smooth. First of all, it is necessary to recruit enough bilingual teachers. Possible methods include hiring domestic or foreign English teachers to teach together, encouraging general subject teachers to take bilingual teaching courses, or sending domestic teachers to overseas for short-term training. Without high-quality bilingual teachers, student learning will be greatly reduced.* (P011005003)
- *I think that in addition to bilingual teachers, schools should actively strive for funds to meet The equipment needed by teachers and students for bilingual teaching and learning, and build a high-quality bilingual learning environment, in order to improve the effectiveness of bilingual teaching and learning.* (P021006003)
- *I think that through the bilingual teacher community, we can carry out joint preparation, lesson observation and discussion, teachers can communicate with each other and share their experiences, which is better than working alone.* (T011007003)
- *Their English proficiency is not good, so it is really difficult for them to teach in English. In the end, they may have to cope with the policy and make arrangement just messing around.*  
(T021008003)

#### **4.4. The Urban-Rural Gap, Difficulties and Low Teachers' Willingness in Collaborative Teaching Will Create Difficulties in Promoting Bilingual Education**

The current challenges faced by primary and secondary schools in promoting bilingual education include the lack of bilingual teachers, the gap between urban and rural teachers and resources, and the learning gap between students. Teachers have to balance subject knowledge and English difficulties, and bilingual teachers and courses do not have certain review standards (Huang Xiu-ping, 2021), Analysis of the interview data revealed that the gap in teachers and resources between urban and rural areas, the burden of bilingual teaching on teachers, etc. will all cause difficulties in the implementation of bilingual education. The relevant opinions are as follows:

- *Every teacher has his own class management and teaching work to do. It is really difficult to find common time for community discussions. Teachers even ask for joint preparation, class observation and discussion, which invisibly causes great pressure on teachers. , influence the willingness to promote bilingual teaching. (T011007004)*
- *Since I am a teacher with a technical and vocational background, promoting bilingual teaching is really a heavy burden for me, and it will also affect the teaching in my professional field. (T021008004)*
- *I live in an urban area, and my parents have told me that English is important since I was a child. In addition to English courses at school, I also take tutoring outside, so now I feel well adapted to bilingual courses. (S011011004)*
- *I grew up in the countryside. I didn't have a computer at home, and I've never been good at English since I was a child. When I took bilingual classes, I couldn't understand the English parts. I felt it was a waste of time and would affect my study of other subjects and professional subjects. (S021012004)*

## **5. Conclusions and Suggestions**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

This study is based on literature analysis and interviews with relevant high school education personnel and students. The conclusions are as follows:



### **5.1.1. The Direction and Supporting Measures of Bilingual Education Policy Affect the Progress and Implementation Effectiveness of Bilingual Education.**

The interviewees generally believe that if the government's bilingual education policy is in the right direction and has well supporting measures to solve the resulting problems, schools will be able to fully cooperate.

### **5.1.2. It is Helpful for Schools to Set Clear Bilingual Education Goals and Expected Benefits.**

The interviewees generally believed that if the school's bilingual goals are clear and expected benefits. Also, teachers have certain directions that can be followed, bilingual teaching can be more effective.

### **5.1.3. There are Differences in the Effectiveness of Bilingual Education for Students in General High Schools and Technical High Schools.**

General high schools and technical high schools are different in the number of English course hours per week, students' English proficiency and learning process, and there are certain differences in the effectiveness of bilingual teaching.

### **5.1.4. Bilingual Teachers and Community Preparation are the Key to the Success of Bilingual Education.**

The quality of teachers is related to the success or failure of education. Cultivating and hiring excellent bilingual teachers and encouraging them to form a community to jointly research and develop bilingual teaching is the key to the success of bilingual education.

### **5.1.5. Creating an Immersive Learning Environment can improve the Effectiveness of Bilingual Teaching.**

Create an immersive bilingual learning environment, increase students' English listening and speaking time, so that students can naturally immerse themselves in the English learning environment, which will be of great help to students' English listening, speaking and communication skills.

### **5.1.6. The Urban-Rural Gap and Insufficient Resources are Major Obstacles to Promoting Bilingual Education.**

The interviewers generally believe that there are insufficient bilingual teachers and equipment in rural areas, and a huge gap between urban and rural areas. It is difficult to fully implemented bilingual education.

### **5.1.7. Too Much Time in English Teaching Affects Students' Acquisition of Professional Subject Knowledge.**

The interviewees believed that if too much emphasis is placed on English teaching in bilingual teaching of general subjects or professional subjects, the learning of subject knowledge will be squeezed out.

### **5.1.8. Bilingual Teaching Creates a Burden on Teachers and affects their Willingness to promote it.**

Some teachers interviewed believe that bilingual teaching has caused a lot of extra work and burden for teachers, especially for teachers with poor English proficiency. This will seriously affect their willingness to promote bilingual education. In the end, they can only reluctantly cooperate and it is just a perfunctory and superficial.

## **5.2. Suggestions**

In response to the above conclusion, the researchers made the following suggestions:

### **5.2.1. Cooperate with Policies, Set Clear Bilingual Teaching Goals, and Set Up Dedicated Units in Schools to Actively Promote Bilingual Teaching.**

Schools should cooperate with the government's bilingual policy, convene relevant teachers in the school, set bilingual education goals, actively promote and review them regularly.

### **5.2.2. Pay equal attention to subject professional knowledge and English ability.**

When conducting bilingual teaching, teachers teaching Chinese and English should coordinate in advance and prepare lessons together, so that subject knowledge and English literature teaching should take both aspects into consideration, so as not to focus on one and lose the other.

### **5.2.3. Recruit Additional English Teachers for Collaborative Teaching to Reduce the Burden on Teachers and Increase their Willingness to Teach Bilingually.**

Schools should actively strive for plans and funds to recruit bilingual teachers to assist in the promotion of bilingual teaching to reduce the burden on teachers in the school increases the willingness of teachers.

### **5.2.4. Establish a Bilingual Learning Community to Prepare, Observe and Discuss Lessons Together to Improve Teaching Quality.**

Bilingual teachers should establish a learning community and hold regular meetings to review and improve teaching deficiencies and improve the quality of bilingual teaching through joint lesson preparation, teaching observation and after-class review meetings.

### **5.2.5. Invest Funds to Create an Immersive Bilingual Learning Environment and Improve the Function of Contextual Education.**

Schools must build a high-quality bilingual learning environment and improve the functions of English so that students can combine learning English with life and become naturally immersed in it.

### **5.2.6 Strengthen Digital Technology-Assisted Bilingual Teaching and Shorten the Gap Between Urban and Rural Areas.**

Actively seek funding from higher-level units, strengthen digital technology-assisted bilingual teaching, focus on rural resources, take care of disadvantaged students in rural areas, and narrow the gap between urban and rural areas.

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