

***Incorporating Compulsory Military Service in  
English Education in Taiwan:  
Issues of Teacher Recruitment in EFL context***

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This article investigated one English policy in Taiwan by shedding light on the recruitment of English teachers. The Taiwanese government has assigned English Educational Military Substitutes to assist early English education due to the lack of qualified English teachers in rural districts since Taiwan implemented the national English education in elementary schools in 2001. The government praises this policy as realization of educational equality because the introduction of the English Educational Military Substitutes aims to minimize the educational gap between urban and rural districts. In this paper, specific attention was given to the extent to which this language policy benefits the economically disadvantaged (or advantaged) groups. Data for this paper are drawn primarily from governmental documentation and reports from the Ministry of Education. Critical Applied Linguistics (CALx) both as a theory and a method provided the tools to examine the data. Analysis of the data indicates that this policy doesn't serve the interests of English disadvantage groups as it claims but benefits the economically privileged groups.

**INTRODUCTION**

Few would dispute the important role of English in the East Asian educational system, including Taiwan. In 2001, English was introduced to

elementary Grade 5 and Grade 6 students in the public schools in Taiwan for the first time, and in May, 2004, the Ministry of Education (hereafter referred to as MOE) announced that English would be taught in all elementary schools in Taiwan through Grade 3 to Grade 6 since September, 2005 (MOE, 2004b). It is estimated that 4,000 English teachers will be needed for the implementation of English education starting with Grade 3 across the nation (MOE, 2003). In response to the lack of qualified English teachers, the Ministry of Education (hereafter referred to as the MOE) has taken several measures to increase the numbers of English teachers. The goal of this paper is to examine one of the measures that the MOE developed to solve the lack of qualified English teachers in rural areas, which is to incorporate compulsory military service into English education. Although this policy has been highly praised by the government itself as evidence of fulfilling educational equality, a critical applied linguistics (CALx) approach to the governmental documentation and reports reveals that this language policy in fact serves the interests of the economically privileged groups by depriving the majority group of the opportunities that are only available to the economically privileged people.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Critical applied linguistics (CALx) has emerged in the mid 1980s under the influence of critical canon: critical theory, critical pedagogy or critical literacy, critical discourse analysis; and other general theories: feminism, queer theory, postcolonialism, postmodernism or race theory (see review by Pennycook, 2001). Although there are large overlaps between critical applied linguistics and other critical domains such as critical literacy and critical discourse analysis, CALx goes beyond a synthesis of related critical areas because it may borrow work from other areas-feminism, queer theory, or postcolonialism as mentioned above. However, it should be noted that both CALx and critical discourse analysis or critical literacy aim to question the

power relationship within society and bring social transformation by focusing on the language practice and text production.

### **CALx Approach to Discourse**

Generally speaking, critical approaches to discourse, or more widely understood as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) seek to embed questions of language in social and political contexts and raise questions of social, economic and political justice, power and/or differences (Fairclough, 1989). In other words, a critical approach to language views language as a vital role in the construction of social, political and cultural difference and hierarchy (Mey, 1985). Fairclough explains CDA as an approach to explore systematically the relationship between “(a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social cultural structures, relations and process” (1995, p. 132). He has examined ways in which language is employed to maintain and produce relations of power within society and how discourses that reproduce ideology spread across the globe (see Fairclough, 2000). Kress explains CDA as “linguistic-discursive practices” that are linked to “the wider socio-political structures of power and domination” (1990, p. 85). One of the main goals for CDA is to draw connection between micro and macro discourses, finding ways of understanding the relationship between macro discourse of society, class, education globalization, colonialism, racism, homophobia, on the one hand, and micro discourse of conversations, texts, and genres, on the other hand. For CDA, it views language and the social practices in which it is embedded as having implications for inherently political aspects of life-distribution of social power and goods, privilege and exploitation, solidarity and difference (Gee, 2004). It is not enough, however, merely to map language contexts to social contexts, but rather conduct such analysis with a view in mind that regards social relation as problematic and thus subject to transformation. CDA is thus thought to be involved with activism (Wright, 2004). This line of thinking can be seen as derived from critical theory which takes the critiques of social inequality as a way of creating possibility of

social transformation (Poster, 1989). For Widdowson (2001), being critical means appraising alternative facets of reality and evaluating different perspectives on a topic. For Dean (1994), a critical practice is a “problematizing” practice because “it is unwilling to accept the taken-for-granted components of our reality and the ‘official accounts’ of how they came to be the way they are” (p. 4, emphasis original).

### **CALx Approach to Language Policy and Planning**

Growing scholarship in language policy and planning (LPP) has depicted the process created and sustained through discourse. Burgeoning CALx scholars in LPP who derived their approach from critical discourse analysis have examined the process of national language planning and policy in the developing world influenced by the global spread of English (Pennycook, 1995, 2000a; Phillipson, 1992, 2000; Ricento, 2000a, 2000b; Tollefson, 1991, 2002; Wiley, 2002). Early rational frameworks in language policy and planning have been criticized for their insensitivity to sociopolitical contexts in which language planning itself is embedded and thus failed to deal with questions of social justice (see Ricento, 2000a; Williams, 1992). More recent LPP work with a critical applied linguistic lens has focused on revealing “the relationships among language, power and inequality, which are held to be central concepts for understanding language and society” (Tollefson, 2002, p. 4). It also has aimed to underscore how the elites can use language policy to perpetuate social inequality, and to investigate how the social and political effects of particular language policies continue to disadvantage groups who had to function within the system on which they had little influence. Critical applied linguistics not only tries to understand how language policies serve the interests of privileged groups by disadvantaging the masses, but also seeks ways to shatter those hierarchies. For instance, Tollefson calls for a political approach to language policies which views them as mechanisms “by which the interests of dominant sociopolitical groups are maintained and the seeds of transformation are developed” (1991, p. 32).

Critical LPP scholars have based their thinking on Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony which refers to a process in which a ruling class succeeded in convincing the mass to accept its own value as a norm. Elites may present a policy as for the good of all and thus it allows their domination and exploitation over the others by consent (Gramsci, 1971). Many macro-level frameworks have been proposed to illuminate language policy and planning (e.g., see Fishman (1979) for national language planning; Pennycook (2000a, 2000b) and Ricento (1998) for the ideological orientation of language policy; Tollefson (2002) and Wiley (2002) for educational language policy), but this approach to LPP has been criticized for neglecting the power of human agency (see review in Ricento & Hornberger, 1996) and thus only represents parts of the reality in LPP. Moreover, Wright (2004) also questions this approach for not being able to see that language policy could be an agent for change.

For this paper, I am particularly interested in incorporating a critical applied linguistics view to examine one language policy in Taiwan by shedding light on issues of teacher recruitment. Based on this theoretical framework, the following questions lead the paper: (1) What are the historical contexts within which this language policy was developed? (2) How was the goal of this policy articulated and framed in policy language? (3) What might this policy tell us about the way in which the distribution of social goods or power is challenged, or remains unchallenged?

The following paragraphs first provide a historical account of the English education in elementary schools in Taiwan and then introduce the application of English Educational Military Substitutes to the English education.

## **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH EDUCATION IN TAIWAN**

In order to keep up with the 21st century and the global trends of educational reform, the government in Taiwan launched an educational

reform in 1997 to give Taiwan a competitive edge and improve the overall quality of our citizens' lives. The Ministry of Education, therefore, initiated curricular and instructional reforms in elementary and junior high school education in 1997. *The Consultants' Concluding Report on Education Reform* published in 1996 proposed five major recommendations on school reform:

- (1) "the de-regulation of elementary and junior high schools", which granted schools more autonomy in deciding the teaching materials and contents for their students;
- (2) "curriculum reform", which is later materialized by the publication of *General Guidelines of Grade 1-9 Curriculum of Elementary and Junior High School Education*;
- (3) "improving teacher instruction", which focused on teacher's training and education;
- (4) "introducing English to elementary students";
- (5) "assisting students in developing the basic academic capacities" (MOE, 2004d, p. 1).

Among the five major recommendations, the development and implementation of the Grade 1-9 curriculum is prioritized in order to meet national development needs and public expectations (MOE, 2004d). Besides, English was introduced to elementary students in Taiwan for the first time in public schools and it was divided into two stages: Stage One begins at Grade 5 and ends at Grade 6; Stage Two begins at Grade 7 and ends at Grade 9. English courses for Grade 5 and Grade 6 were implemented in the 2001 school year and schools have the autonomy to determine the content and teaching materials for such courses.

The reasons why the government has implemented national English education in elementary schools can be identified as the following (MOE, 1998):

1. To cultivate citizen's global perspective and enhance Taiwan's economic edge over other Asian countries. English is an international language

and proficiency in English is believed to be essential in international affairs;

2. To take advantage of the critical period in foreign language learning. The notion of “the earlier, the better” is prevalent in Taiwanese society<sup>1</sup>. It is believed that children have the talents to learn languages well and quickly. Once English is introduced to children at early ages in formal schooling, parents don’t have to spend enormous amount money in private language institutes<sup>2</sup>;
3. To grasp the opportunity of the announcement of *General Guidelines of Grade 1-9 Curriculum of Elementary and Junior High School Education*, which puts great emphasis on the reform of language arts alongside with other subjects;
4. To meet the societal and parental demand. In the global village where the interaction of each country grows rapidly, the society and parents have realized the importance of English proficiency for our next generation, and thus have asked for early English education for a long time;
5. To minimize the educational gap between urban and rural districts and to realize the goal of educational equality. Parents from cities can usually afford to pay for the private English courses for their children.

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of “the earlier, the better” in language learning can be easily found in the public rhetoric, especially among the advertisement of English private institutes and the parents of young children. Chang, Chang & Yian (2001) interviewed parents of pre-school children about their perspectives on early English education. The data shows that 62.8% of the parents interviewed sent their kids to preschools with English instruction and 77% think the government should include English in the preschool education.

<sup>2</sup> Chen (2000) argues that this national English education might foster the burgeoning of private English institutes in present Taiwan. According to Tsai (2002), the profits of private English institutes in 2000 were not affected by the economic depression but still enjoyed 20% to 25% increase. Yang (2004) claims that the motivation of parents to send their children to private English institutes is not diminished by the provision of national English education in the elementary schools.

Some of them even send their children to English-speaking countries during the summer. According to Chen (1996), over 83% of Grade 6 students in Taipei City District had experiences of English learning, and Lu (1995) reports that 61.9% of elementary students in Taichung City District are learning or have learned English. However, in Taitung County District, Lee (2003) discovers that only 30% of Grade 6 students have had the same experiences. Therefore, it is believed that the government implements national English education in elementary schools partly due to the consideration for educational equality.

It should be noted, however, that several local governments have already implemented English as a new subject even before 2001, the year the MOE aimed to begin English education in the elementary schools. English has been taught to students in elementary schools since 1998 in Taipei and Tainan City Districts. The target groups in these two cities are Grade 3 to Grade 6 (MOE, 2002). Taipei City District even started English education from Grade 1 since 2002 (All elementary students in Taipei city, 2001). Under the umbrella of this national language policy, every local government could still decide when to implement English education based on their funding and teaching resources. It turns out to be a condition in which those cities with more funding could provide early English education, even before the governmental plans and thus reinforced their students' language advantages that they might already have from the private institutes. This policy, therefore, did not solve the problem of rural and urban discrepancy in terms of English education but only deferred it. In the face of the fact that richer cities could afford earlier English education and the poorer cities couldn't, the government announced in May, 2004 that English will be taught in all elementary schools in Taiwan through Grade 3 to Grade 6 since September 2005 (MOE, 2004b).

### **Problems of English Education in Elementary Schools**

As the MOE keeps advancing English education in the elementary schools in Taiwan, many problems begin to surface. Many researchers identify lack

of qualified teachers as the most frequent problem (Chen, 2000; Lee, 2003; Pan, 1997; Qui, 1998; Tsou, 1993). Other problems include great discrepancy among individual student's English proficiency, unavailability of appropriate localized English materials and lack of opportunities for students to practice English. It is estimated that 4,000 English teachers will be needed for the implementation of English education starting from Grade 3 across the nation (MOE, 2003). In response to the lack of qualified English teachers, the MOE has taken several measures to increase the numbers of English teachers:

1. Provide multiple channels to train English teachers. In the past, teachers were all from normal Teachers Colleges, but now other universities or colleges can provide educational curriculum for those who want to be teachers. Those in regular universities or colleges become qualified to be English teachers once they take English teaching certification courses during their college year. Besides, people who have the TOEFL 213 or equivalent English proficiency can obtain English teacher certificates if (a) they take the English training courses, (b) finish the elementary educational curriculum training and (c) serve as a student teacher for about 1 year in local schools (MOE, 1999a, 1999b, 2000). Lastly, the government began to introduce foreign teachers to work full-time in public schools in 2004. The first five teachers from Canada were introduced to work in the public schools in October, 2004, and another 14 teachers arrived in Taiwan in February, 2005 (MOE, 2004e, 2005).
2. Integrate English instructional supervision groups to help English teachers. The instructional supervision groups have existed in Taiwan for several years. They are framed by subjects and every subject has its own instructional supervision group. The local education bureaus take the major responsibility of forming instructional supervision groups and the groups tour around the assigned districts under the supervision of the local government. The main responsibility for English instructional supervision is to demonstrate teaching and provide teaching resources and guidance for English teachers. English instructional supervision

groups are usually made up of foreign English teachers and local teachers from the private English institutes (Cheng, 2002).

3. Integrate the military substitute service into early English education. For young males who have been studying abroad since they were teenagers and haven't completed their compulsory service, they can choose to complete the military service by teaching English. It is eligible to any Taiwanese males who go to study in any English speaking countries, such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, before the age of 18 and thus haven't finished their compulsory military service. A college-level degree is required to apply for the military substitute service. Instead of serving in a military, the military substitutes teach English in elementary schools situated in remote districts. In September, 2004, twenty six of the first batch of 'English Educational Military Substitutes' (hereafter referred to as the EEMSs) were distributed to various remote elementary schools around Taiwan to assist English education (MOE, 2004c). The following section will give a brief introduction of the compulsory military service in Taiwan and examine its application to English education.

## **COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE IN TAIWAN AND ITS APPLICATION TO ENGLISH EDUCATION**

The Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) had adopted the compulsory military service since 1933 while they were still in power in China. It provided the major military forces in the rapid preparation for the fight with Japanese invasion during the World War Two. When the KMT later retreated to Taiwan in 1949, the compulsory military service remains due to Taiwan's tense relationship with People's Republic of China. In recent years, the tension across the Taiwan Strait has ceased greatly and thus the Ministry of Defense reorganized the military by providing more choices of military substitute services with the hope that Taiwan will transit to voluntary

recruitment of military force in the future (Lee, 2005).

According to the Article I of Military Service System Military Service Act amended in 2000, all male citizens of Taiwan are obligated to take military service. All Taiwanese males between 18 and 40 years old (also referred as draftee) have the obligation to serve in the army for about one year and ten months. All males have to finish this service if they are to live, work and study in Taiwan, even when they emigrate to other countries prior to the age of 18 and obtain other country's citizenship, or go to study abroad prior to the age of 18 and obtain other country's citizenship (Ministry of National Defense, 2000). Those who study abroad for their college or graduate degrees before the age of 18 can only stay in Taiwan no more than two months whenever they go back during their pursuit of the degree, unless there are some extenuating reasons, such as severe illness, accidents, or the successive holidays in the schools. When they finish their degrees and no longer hold student status, they will be notified to serve in the military once they come back to Taiwan.<sup>3</sup> For holders of dual nationalities, they still need to complete their compulsory military service. Under Article 14 of the Regulations for Exit of Draftees, draftees who have maintained household registration Taiwan and have the status of double nationalities should enter and exit the country by presenting their Taiwanese passports. Those who entered the country using their foreign passports are subject to conscription and should be barred from leaving the country (Department of Compulsory Military Service, 2001).

There are several different types of military services with different service period. For example, those who have bad physical condition might have shorter service period and those who are in substitute service would have longer service period<sup>4</sup>. Types of substitute service include police military

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<sup>3</sup> According to the Military Service Act, the oldest age to study for a bachelor degree is 24 years old, 27 years old for a master degree, and 30 years old for a doctoral degree.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Military Service Act, the substitute service can be enforced when the National Defense Military is not obstructed, and under the conditions when

substitute service, firefighter substitute service, social military substitute service, environmental military substitute service, medical military substitute service and educational military substitute service. The regular service period for military substitute service is two years, if the applicants are in good physical condition.<sup>5</sup>

The first batch of the educational military substitutes were recruited in 2000 and the main goal of this educational substitute service is to “balance the urban and rural developmental discrepancy and promote the teaching resources in the disadvantaged areas”, according to Fan, the vice minister of governmental affairs (cited in MOE, 2004a, p. 2). Among 1,679 educational military substitutes in 2004, 7.8% have teaching certificates or special technical certificates. The report from MOE praises the educational military substitutes for “their teaching profession and enthusiasm, as well as the impressive achievements in balancing the rural and urban developmental discrepancy, maintaining the campus security, helping the disable and drop-off students” and they have become “a reliable force for the schools” (MOE, 2004c).

Fan later proposed the English Educational Military Substitutes (EEMSs) in 2003 for young males who go abroad to study before the age of 18 and who haven’t finished the compulsory military service. This new policy, according to the report from MOE, “not only opens up a new channel for the abroad draftees to come back to Taiwan to finish their compulsory military service, but also provides the abroad draftees with opportunities to put their

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the replacement of soldiers is not affected, quality of the soldiers is not deteriorated, and does not against the fairness of military service. Personnel with special skills should be the first priority to satisfy the substitute service demand, and the basic military training of substitute service is handled by the Ministry of Interior together with the Ministry of National Defense.

<sup>5</sup> Generally, various types of substitute services are open to every male, but people with a certain professional background have greater opportunities to serve in some particular alternative military service than those who don’t. For example, people with teaching or consulting experience will be more likely to work as educational military substitutes than as environmental military substitutes.

English profession into practice to enhance the teaching resources in the remote areas and to decrease the rural and urban English educational discrepancy” (MOE, 2004c). This policy was implemented in 2004 and the first batch of 26 EEMSs were made up of 1.3% of educational military substitutes in 2004 and they were all distributed to remote schools to assist English teaching (MOE, 2004a). The deputy director of Conscription Agency Ministry of Interior, Tai-Li Chung pointed out that the new policy is “helpful to bring the abroad draftees back to Taiwan and to keep the professionals in Taiwan.... therefore, the Conscription Agency Ministry of Interior will continue to accept the applications with college degrees from abroad” (cited in Lin, 2006).

Although the MOE and governmental officials spoke favorably of this policy which both improves the teaching resources for the disadvantage districts and helps to attract the young professionals abroad back to Taiwan, I argue that this policy needs further examination for the following issues.

### **The Number of Student Beneficiaries**

The number of the students taught by the EEMSs as claimed by the MOE might not reflect the real practice at school. The first three columns from the Table 1 are drawn from the MOE report while the rest of three columns are drawn by the researcher from the Ministry of Interior. The MOE praised the huge number of 1,322 students taught by the EEMSs in the report but if we combine the data from the Ministry of Interior, we find that it only consists of 1.7% of the students in these remote districts. Therefore, whether or not the EEMSs did offer great help to the districts they work with by closing the urban-rural discrepancy remains unclear. Besides, according to several phone interviews with four in-service EEMSs during the summer 2005, EEMSs can't teach English in the regular class because they don't have any teaching certificate from Taiwan. Therefore, they can only “assist” English education before or after the regular class sessions (e.g. morning session or extracurricular session). The number of students benefited from this policy, therefore, needs

further examination to have a better understanding of how this policy benefits the students in the remote districts.

**TABLE 1**  
**Numbers and Places of the Distribution English Educational Military Substitutes**

county	Number of Military Substitutes	Number of English Classes Assisted	Numbers of Students Being Taught	Number of Students in Grade 5 and 6	Numbers of Teachers in Elementary Schools	Percentage of students taught by the EEMs
Hsingchu	2	1	15	14,825	2,487	0.1%
Niento	3	31	518	15,092	3,014	3.4%
Tainan	2	5	125	28,583	4,884	0.4%
Taitung	2	4	45	6,373	1,493	0.7%
Hualien	5	18	290	9,912	2,062	2.9%
Lienjian	2	5	92	194	101	47%
Penghu	7	26	237	2,210	617	10.7%
Total	26	90	1,322	77,189	14,685	1.7%

From Epaper.edu.tw/074, October 19, 2004 and Ministry of the Interior, 2004

### **Doubtful Standards of EEMs**

Positive official comments about the efficacy of abroad draftees' English proficiency on English education in Taiwan reflect their teaching ability is assumed and not challenged.

Lack of English pedagogical training for these EEMs reflects this assumption. Although MOE proposed the pedagogical training for the EEMs (2004c), in reality, they only receive three weeks of professional training prior to their services. Professional training is categorized as general courses, professional courses and teaching assistance courses. General courses, made up of 21% of the total professional training, refer to the understanding of campus laws, national education laws and school management. Professional courses, made up of 58% of the total training, refer to the understanding of first aid, maintenance of campus safety, traffic safety and practice of the baton. Teaching assistance courses, made up of 21% of the total training, refer to physical or social extracurricular activities that are conducive to the educational substitutes' working efficiency, such as

speeches and singing competition (MOE, 2004a, pp. 8-11). Little pedagogical training is offered to the educational substitutes, let alone English pedagogical training for EEMSs who have never taught English as a foreign language to elementary students. To regard native speaker competence (or speakers from English speaking countries in military substitute service in the Taiwanese context) as a legitimate norm tends to contribute to an “inequitable hierarchy” in which inequality is relational and “relates to multiple aspects of identity, authenticity, fluency and appropriacy in a given interactional context” (Phillipson, 2000, p. 98). These EEMSs’ English proficiency and their pedagogical competence are presumed while the English proficiency of the rest of the Taiwanese males who study in Taiwan is negated.

### **Advantaging the Economically Privileged**

This policy specifically benefits the rich families, because they are usually those who can afford to send their children to study abroad during their adolescence. Reasons for the families to do so are usually because of their disaffection of Taiwanese educational system and their hope that their children can learn English well in English speaking countries. Before the implementation of this policy, these children from the economically prestigious families still need to serve in the army as soon as they finish their degrees abroad.<sup>6</sup> However, now they have another easier option of completing their compulsory military service which is not open to the majority of Taiwanese males. This policy has become a double bonus for children of the economically privileged families and to some extent, the compulsory service can be bought out by them when the government trades the compulsory service for more English teachers. Economic conflicts and inequalities might increase with the recruitment of EEMSs from the economically privileged

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<sup>6</sup> Male students are usually sent to study abroad for high schools and then continue to colleges. They must go abroad before they turn to the age of 18. Otherwise, they cannot go abroad longer than two months once they turn 18.

families.

### **Exclusion of Degrees Obtained outside of English Speaking Countries**

Only Taiwanese males who go to study in English speaking countries for their college degrees are eligible to apply for EEMS service. Personal communication with some past EEMSs indicated that one graduate from New Zealand, though majoring in Russian still served in EEMS (07.15.05). It seems that the most critical criterion for selection is country-based, rather than merit-based. Those who study in Africa, South America, Asia and Europe, except UK, are excluded from this policy regardless of their profession. The majority of Taiwanese males are also excluded from the EEMS service. Even those who have degrees in English or linguistics from any Taiwanese educational institutions are not eligible to the EEMS service.

## **CONCLUSION**

While the government concentrates on promoting English education in elementary schools across the country and tries hard to equalize the English educational resources between urban and rural districts, the measures it takes may serve different political interests simultaneously. The introduction of EEMSs aims to serve the interests of English disadvantaged groups but at the same time it benefits the economically privileged groups. As Ricento (2000b) argues, language policies are fundamentally political documents that are formulated with compromise, based on a set of assumptions and expected possible outcomes, and formal planned language policies do not necessarily achieve their goals, whether they are oppressive or liberal. In order to achieve its claimed goal, the government needs to compromise with the benefits that are only available for a small number of people.

Many researchers in TESOL/TEFOL have attempted to show us that the teaching of English is highly political (e.g., Fairclough, 1989; Pennycook,

1994; Tollefson, 1991). Individuals of goodwill might not be aware that their work serves the dominant interests. This also applies to the recruitment of English teachers in TESOL/TEFOL. In the case of the assignment of EEMSs to early English education in Taiwan, it seems to serve the government's explicit interest in decreasing the gap between urban and rural educational resources, as the MOE claimed, but several factors need to be considered and examined before the government praises its success in minimizing the discrepancy between rural and urban districts in terms of English education resources. Whether or not this policy serves the government's implicit interest in appealing to more Taiwanese males abroad to return to Taiwan needs further research.

With a growing recognition of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary characteristics of language planning and policy, it is clear that language planning and policy should and must "deal with issues of language behavior and...discourse analysis, ethnography, and critical social theory" (Ricento 2000a, p. 22). More ethnographic research to study this language policy can illuminate how the local schools and EEMSs interact with this top-down policy. So far, the data presented here only reveal part of the whole picture about how social issues are hidden in English education and recruitment of English teachers in Taiwan.

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