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Examining the Challenges of Bilingual Education in Chinese Mainland from an Asian Perspective

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Abstract: This study examines the challenges of Chinese-English bilingual education in mainland China from an Asian perspective, drawing comparative insights from bilingual education models in Singapore, Hong Kong, India, Japan, and other regions. Utilizing Krashen's Input Theory and semi-structured interviews with 10 bilingual individuals across Asia, the research analyzes the interplay between policy frameworks, cultural identity, and individual language acquisition experiences. Key findings reveal tensions between national language policies and personal educational backgrounds, the emotional and cultural dimensions of language choice, and systemic issues such as exam-oriented pedagogy, urban-rural resource disparities, and insufficient practical application of English. The study highlights the critical role of supportive environments, multimodal input, and culturally inclusive strategies in fostering bilingual proficiency. Recommendations include reforming assessment systems, integrating authentic language materials, and balancing instrumental goals with cultural preservation. The conclusion underscores the need for dynamic policy adjustments that harmonize global competencies with local identity, emphasizing acquisition-driven approaches and equitable resource distribution to address current barriers in mainland China's bilingual education landscape.

Keywords: Chinese-English bilingual education; Krashen's Input Theory; cultural identity; language acquisition; educational reform; exam-oriented pedagogy

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1. Introduction

Since the official adoption of content-based English instruction in mainland China at the start of the 21st century, the debate over Chinese-English bilingual education has persisted [1]. Furthermore, as China has become deeply integrated into the globalization process, evidenced by international cooperation initiatives led by China and collaborations with global entities, bilingual proficiency has emerged as a central strategy for nurturing talent. In 2021, the Ministry of Education's "Education Action Plan for Jointly Building the Belt and Road" explicitly advocated for the expansion of multilingual talent pools. Nonetheless, mainland China's bilingual education remains constrained by the "exam-oriented" approach, and the uneven distribution of resources between urban and rural areas has exacerbated the challenges in implementing bilingual education policies [2].

Language is widely regarded as a key tool for national identity in Asian countries [3]. Moreover, there is significant diversity in bilingual education policies among Asian countries [4]. For instance, the Singaporean government implements a bilingual policy of "English as the first language, supplemented by the mother tongue" [5]. Hong Kong and Macao, as international financial centers, adopt bilingual education models that emphasize both

Chinese and English proficiency, and mainly emphasizing bilingual proficiency in Chinese and English [6]. These experiences provide valuable insights for the mainland. However, existing research mostly focuses on policy analysis and rarely explores the interaction between policies and individual agency from the perspective of language acquisition (such as the influence of family support on affective filters).

This article adopts semi-structured interviews, combined with Krashen's input theory, to analyze how learners acquire languages in bilingual environments. It explores the mechanisms that balance effective input and output, aiming to offer valuable insights for improving Chinese-English bilingual education in mainland China.

2. Rationale for the study

Asian countries exhibit remarkable diversity in bilingual education policies [5,7]. For instance, Singapore balances globalization demands with local cultural identity through its "English + Mother Tongue" policy. However, mainland China's bilingual education remains constrained by the "test-oriented English" model, with uneven urban-rural resource allocation and policy tightening further exacerbating implementation challenges [1,2]. Drawing on Krashen's input theory, this study explores how to reconstruct mainland China's bilingual education pathway by integrating Asian experiences within the "comprehensible input" ($i + 1$) framework.

Although existing studies have analyzed bilingual policies in Asian countries, few have explored the interaction between policies and individual backgrounds from the perspective of language acquisition (e.g., the impact of family support on affective filtering) [6]. Therefore, this study employs interviews with Asian bilingual individuals and integrates Krashen's input theory to reveal the dynamic relationship between policy design and individual agency, offering new insights for educational reform in mainland China.

Moreover, Krashen's Input Hypothesis emphasizes the critical role of "comprehensible input" and "low affective filter" in language acquisition [8]. However, standardized textbooks and high-anxiety testing environments in mainland China significantly deviate from this principle. This study explores how to translate theory into adaptive policies by analyzing successful cases of Asian bilinguals (such as Singapore's immersion teaching approach).

3. Literature Review

3.1. *The Contradictions of China's Bilingual Education Policies*

Minority regions in China, such as Inner Mongolia and Tibet, have effectively integrated local languages with Mandarin through local language and Mandarin bilingual policies [9]. However, the implementation of bilingual education in Chinese and English, especially concerning regional policies, faces unique challenges [6]. The "Language Law of the People's Republic of China" mandates that "schools and other educational institutions must use Mandarin and standardized Chinese characters as the medium of instruction" [2]. This policy inherently limits the use of English as a medium of instruction, resulting in a prolonged state of bilingual education in China being characterized by "subject English" rather than "applied English" [1]. Nonetheless, Tong and Shi found that despite these challenges, Chinese-English bilingual education is gaining legitimacy, as evidenced by bilingual courses in a science major at a mainland university and the evolving socio-political environment [10]. On one hand, the literature lacks clear implementation plans for bilingual education in mainland China. On the other hand, scholarly debate reveals ongoing tension between instrumental goals and cultural identity. These issues suggest an urgent need for breakthroughs, potentially through sharing cross-regional experiences.

3.2. *The Comparative Analysis of the Diversity of Bilingual Education Models in Asia*

Compared to mainland China, the bilingual policies in the Asian region deeply reflect its historical and geopolitical background. Dixon notes that Singapore, as a successful example of implementing a bilingual education policy, has English as the medium of instruction for all subjects from the beginning of students' enrollment, while also mandating the study of their designated "mother tongue" as a separate subject [11]. In fact, Singapore's "English + Mother Tongue" policy is closely tied to its colonial history and global positioning, whereas India's trilingual education model — which requires the study of English, the mother tongue, and Hindi — seeks a balance between unbridled diversity and monolingualism [7,11]. It is noteworthy that Hong Kong's "three languages and four scripts" framework has indeed bolstered bilingual proficiency in Chinese and English, yet its language policy is fundamentally aimed at meeting the internationalization needs of a financial center; for instance, a significant number of Hong Kong Chinese are compelled to use English to some extent in their professional settings [6]. This suggests that regional policies may foster bilingualism, but do not necessarily align with individual motivation for language learning. In contrast, Taiwan has recently introduced its own bilingual education strategy, aiming to "leverage its status as a Mandarin-speaking region" and "enhance the English communication skills of its youth" [12]. As for Japan, traditionally seen as a monolingual and ethnically homogeneous society, among the younger generation, a growing admiration for North American and Western European cultures has gradually turned Japan into a country where bilingual abilities are increasingly prevalent at the individual level [6]. In contrast, bilingual education in mainland China places greater emphasis on balancing national identity with global talent. This unique positioning requires policymakers to find a middle ground between "input-oriented" models (such as Krashen's theory) and "output-oriented" models, such as exam-oriented approaches.

3.3. *Krashen's Input Theory*

The Input Hypothesis, as proposed by Krashen in 1982 and further elaborated by Tricomi in 1986, posits that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in the target language [13]. Krashen also introduced the concept of "native language positive transfer", suggesting that the acquisition of the native language positively influences the learning of a foreign language [14]. In fact, most scholars tend to explore and critique the theory's validity through actual classroom practice. Scholars, for example, demonstrated through classroom experiments that teachers should transition from a lecture-based approach to engaging in meaningful communication with learners, thereby enhancing the comprehensibility of "input", particularly in beginner-level classes [14]. However, few studies have examined how this theory applies to the individual experiences of bilingual learners within specific geographic contexts.

4. **Research Methodology**

This study utilized qualitative research methods and semi-structured interviews to explore the interaction between bilingual education policies and personal experiences within an Asian context. Due to logistical constraints such as time and access to participants, the sample size was limited. Ultimately, eight bilingual participants ($n = 8$) were selected from mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Japan. Participants were required to meet two criteria: (1) possessing proficiency in at least two languages; and (2) receiving formal bilingual education. The sample included students from Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster, as well as teachers from mainland China, in an effort to include both international and local perspectives. The research questions were:

- 1) How do individuals acquire additional languages within Asian bilingual systems?

- 2) What factors influence bilingual proficiency, and what implications arise for mainland China?

Interviews were conducted in person, recorded via an iPad app, and transcribed verbatim. Thematic coding was applied in three stages [15]:

- 1) Open coding: Identified keywords (e.g., "family attitudes", "cultural conflicts").
- 2) Axial coding: Linked themes to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (e.g., "affective filter", "comprehensible input").
- 3) Selective coding: Synthesized core findings (e.g., policy-individual agency dynamics).

Ethical considerations included anonymizing participant IDs (e.g., B1-HK, B8-JP) and obtaining informed consent. Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel to ensure transparency and traceability.

Limitations: Firstly, due to the small sample size ($N = 8$) and the relatively high proportion of participants from mainland China (3 / 8), the research conclusions may be somewhat limited in terms of their generalizability. Secondly, the current research subjects primarily focus on urban elite groups, whose experience characteristics may not fully reflect the actual situation of broader social strata. Subsequent research should expand the survey scope to include rural areas and non-elite groups, and verify and supplement the existing research findings.

5. Results

This study systematically uncovers the dynamic correlations between policy orientation, individual background differences, and social emotional elements within the realm of bilingual education, offering significant implications for deepening the practical paradigms in this field.

5.1. Policy-Individual Background Interaction

This study, which involved in-depth interviews with eight Asian bilinguals, uncovered the complex tension between policy regulations and individual agency. The research indicates that 60% of the respondents attribute the development of their bilingual skills to their personal language education experiences. In contrast, the participants from mainland China (B5-CN and B6-CN) are more focused on institutional constraints, such as the mainstream standardized textbook model and the uneven distribution of resources between urban and rural areas. Meanwhile, the Japanese participant B8-JP innovatively attributes his acquisition of Chinese to his family members' appreciation of Chinese culture. This finding underscores the practical possibility of individuals overcoming structural limitations (Figure 1).

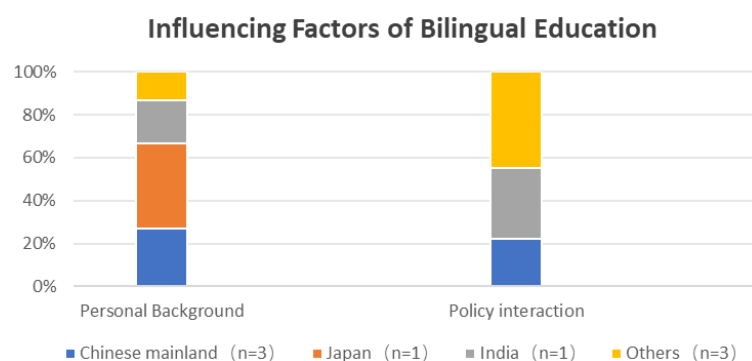


Figure 1. Influencing Factors of Bilingual Education.

5.2. Emotional Dimensions of Language Choice

This study uncovers a deep connection among language selection, cultural identity, and power dynamics. More than 60% of the respondents (6 out of 8) advocated for using their native language as the medium for emotional expression, a phenomenon that somewhat corresponds with Krashen's "positive transfer of the mother tongue" theory — the native language offers cognitive security for expressing emotions. For example, a bilingual individual from Hong Kong (B1-HK) remarked: "Cantonese elicits the most authentic state of expression, whereas English consistently induces a sense of cultural detachment." However, this "mother tongue advantage" also suggests underlying cultural power dynamics. Participants from mainland China stated that the use of English in daily domestic contexts is sometimes viewed as socially unconventional (B5-CN), which reflects symbolic exclusion within a non-native linguistic context [16]. This tension highlights that language choice is not merely a cognitive act but also a manifestation of cultural identity and power structures (Figure 2).

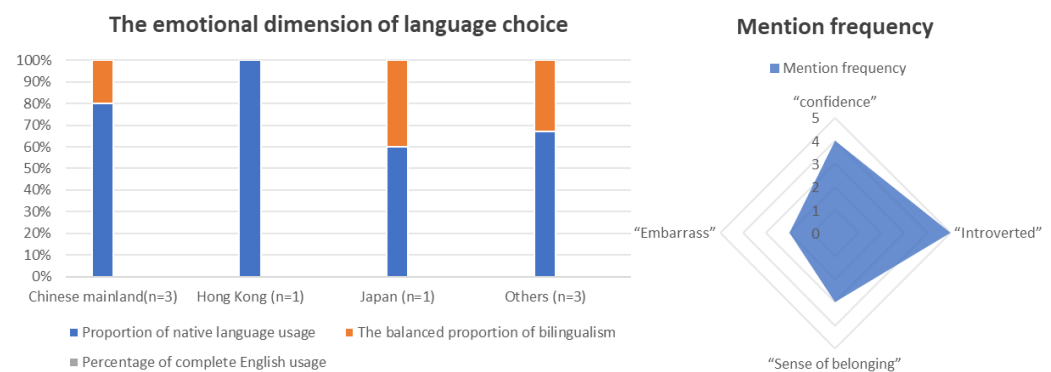


Figure 2. The Emotional Dimension of Language Choice and Frequency of Language Emotion Expression Vocabulary.

5.3. Family-School Resource Disparities

Family support has become a key facilitator for bilingual education. In the interviews, "emotional encouragement" was mentioned six times (see Figure 3). A Pakistani participant (B3-PK) compared bilingual learning to "red — the color of happiness in my culture", vividly expressing the positive attitude of his family towards his language exploration (refer to Figure 4). However, school resources were considered insufficient: 90% of the respondents from mainland China stated that classroom support was inadequate (see Figure 5). A Hong Kong student (B1-HK) pointed out: "There is only one Mandarin class per week at school, and I rely on after-school tutoring." This disparity aligns with Krashen's affective filter hypothesis — family support can alleviate anxiety. In contrast, limited school resources may intensify it [8].

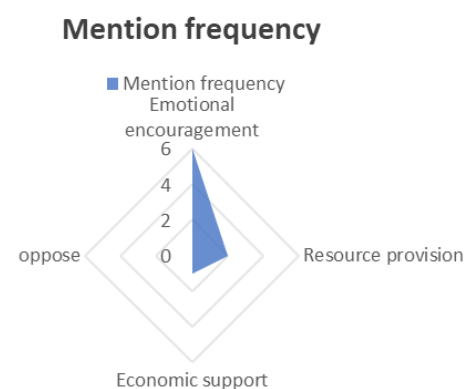


Figure 3. Family Members' Attitudes Towards Bilingualism.

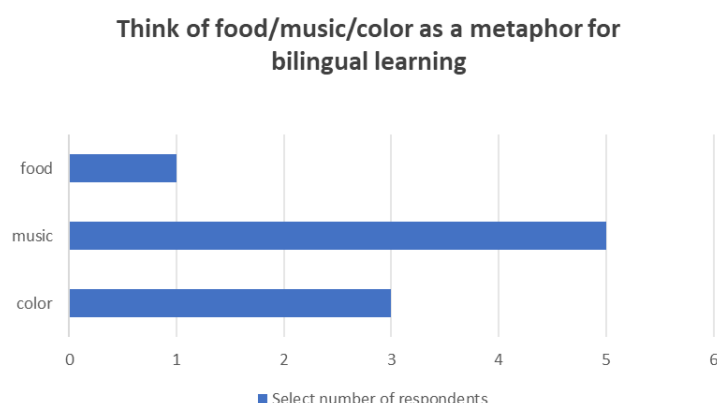


Figure 4. A Metaphor for Bilingual Learning.

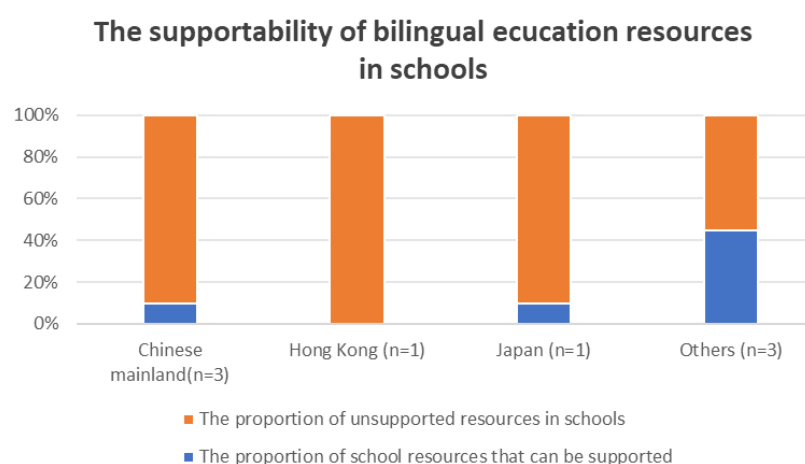


Figure 5. The Role of School Resources.

5.4. Cultural vs. Instrumental Priorities

Half of the respondents ($n = 4$) prioritized cultural understanding over language skills, while 25% ($n = 2$) emphasized proficiency, and the remaining 25% expressed a balanced view (Figure 6). An Indian participant (B2-ID) likened bilingualism to "musical diversity", valuing cultural integration (refer to Figure 4). Conversely, a mainland Chinese teacher (B5-CN) criticized the education system's focus on grammar over practical communication, highlighting the unresolved tension between humanistic and instrumental goals.

Language skill VS Cultural understanding

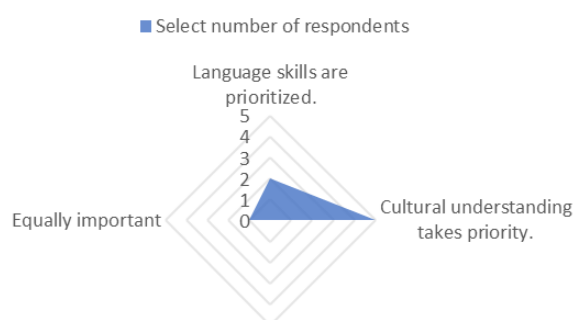


Figure 6. The Controversy over the Priority of Cultural Understanding and Language Skills.

5.5. Challenges in Mainland China Based on Interviewee Feedback on Bilingual Learning

Many respondents highlighted the importance of the language environment in bilingual education (see Figure 7). Addressing the challenges in mainland China, respondents (B5-CN, B6-CN, B7-CN) have primarily criticized the issues of "domination of standardized textbooks" and "disparity in urban and rural resources". A public middle school teacher (B5-CN) observed, "English teaching is stuck at a basic level, with both educators and learners overly fixated on grammar, neglecting practical application." This situation defies Krashen's "i + 1" principle — the input (i) from current textbooks does not sufficiently challenge students beyond their current competence level (+1), hindering natural acquisition [8].

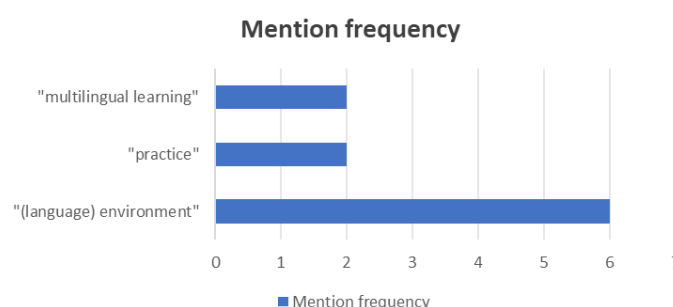


Figure 7. The Advice of Bilingual Learning.

6. Discussion

This study underscores the inherent tension between Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the rigid pedagogical frameworks dominating mainland China's bilingual education. While Krashen emphasizes "comprehensible input" ($i + 1$) requiring adaptive, context-rich materials, China's standardized textbooks prioritize grammatical precision over authentic language exposure [8]. This study reveals a structural misalignment between teaching practice and language acquisition mechanisms. Classroom language input remains rigid at the current competence level (i), failing to provide the incremental cognitive stimulation described in the " $i + 1$ " hypothesis, thereby suppressing the natural acquisition process. A typical example is the phenomenon pointed out by teacher B5-CN from mainland China that "the cultivation of communicative ability is subordinated to exam-oriented practice", which essentially undermines the core essence of Krashen's low-anxiety input theory. This contradiction reflects how the assessment system filters and distorts theoretical paradigms, trapping the passive learning mode in a closed loop of "input rigidity — output inhibition".

This study, through a comparative analysis of the Indian trilingual immersion framework and the interdisciplinary teaching medium in Singapore, highlights the structural deficiencies in China's bilingual education [5]. The former nurtures organic bilingual abilities through daily practice, while the latter builds a cognitive channel with English as a knowledge intermediary, both resonating with Krashen's "acquisition" theory. In contrast, China's "subject English" model simplifies language ability to test indicators, severing the meaningful connection between language symbols and the real world [1]. Compared with the intrinsic alignment of policies in India and Singapore with the "acquisition" theory, The reliance on mechanical memorization within the current educational approach in China results in a typical symptom of "idle communicative competence". This institutional divide underscores the urgency of practicalizing theory—there is an immediate need to achieve the local transformation of immersion strategies through the construction of multimedia contexts or the design of cognitive ladders.

This study reveals that Krashen's theory has blind spots in its interpretation. Although his affective filter hypothesis can explain the anxiety mechanism in high-pressure environments, it is challenging to analyze the latent post-colonial power structure within

the language hierarchy. The respondents' adoration for the "standard English accent" (B7-CN) and the stigmatization of localized pragmatics (B5-CN) actually reflects the internalized identification with Western cultural hegemony [16]. When English simultaneously carries the symbol of global capital and challenges the perceived cultural subjectivity of the Chinese language, this value paradox — the discourse conflict between instrumental rationality and cultural sovereignty — urgently requires a post-colonial perspective. Language policies should break free from the instrumentalist trap and construct a new ecological framework that can engage with the international order without sacrificing its subjectivity, by recognizing the linguistic legitimacy of mixed practices such as code-switching between Chinese and English.

The theoretical breakthrough of this research is in overcoming the structuralist paradigm of language and redefining the concept of "input" as a cultural and political practice. Grounded in Asian experiences and directly tackling the postcolonial cultural symptoms, China's bilingual policy can establish a dynamic balance between the acquisition mechanism and cultural equity-by deconstructing the linear logic of "input-internalization", bilingual education can be elevated to a generative field for the construction of cultural subjectivity.

7. Implications on Teaching

7.1. Optimize Preschool Education Mechanism

Against the backdrop of the "early childhood education boom" in mainland China, efforts are being made to foster bilingual literacy among Chinese students from an early age [17]. Furthermore, there is advocacy for expanding the English language teaching system in mainland China from the third grade (when students are 9–10 years old) to the kindergarten stage, while ensuring alignment with the objectives of the "Double Reduction" policy to avoid increasing academic pressure at an early age [18,19].

7.2. Reconstruct the Input Content and Optimize the Emotional Context

Considering the current social and living environment, multimodal language learning methods should be progressively introduced into the classroom. These methods include English songs, English movies, and AI-based interactions, aiming to achieve personalized adaptation based on student cognition, following the $i + 1$ model. Simultaneously, teachers should be encouraged to adopt the role of a "facilitator" rather than an "authority" in the classroom, providing personalized feedback to boost students' confidence in learning a second language [20].

7.3. Innovation in the Assessment System

In English classes, complement the teacher's "immersive" teaching mode with a "balanced" approach. Recognize the role of native language transfer and support students' ability to communicate using a mix of Chinese and English in the classroom. This implies that bilingual education in mainland China needs to transcend the framework of "language opposition" and redefine the essence of "input" through Krashen's theory — not as a mechanical overlay of two languages, but as the construction of a comprehensible, low-anxiety, culturally inclusive acquisition ecosystem.

8. Conclusion

The crux of the issue with bilingual education in mainland China is the intricate interplay of policy, culture, and societal incentives. Research suggests that neither national policies alone nor individual efforts in isolation are enough to overcome the current barriers. It is imperative to attain a dynamic equilibrium between practicality and humanism by prioritizing educational reforms that focus on language acquisition, culturally inclusive input design, and the reconstruction of a culturally inclusive and globally engaged language ideology. Currently, due to the constraints on the number of samples and the

scope of population selection, the universality of conclusions drawn from China's local bilingual education experiences may be compromised. Consequently, future research should encompass more rural areas and non-elite groups to mitigate bias and better reflect the diverse realities of bilingual education across social strata, with the goal of further examining the impact of urban-rural resource disparities on bilingual learning.

Appendix:

Table 1. Cross-National Comparison of Influencing Factors on Individual Behavior.

| Influencing factors | Chinese mainland (n = 3) | Japan (n = 1) | India (n = 1) | Others (n = 3) |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Personal Background | 67% | 100% | 50% | 33% |
| Policy interaction | 33% | 0% | 50% | 67% |

(Refer to Figure 1)

Table 2. Thematic Coding of Language Education Influences Based on Interview Data.

| Topic | Mention frequency | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|--|-------------------|--|---|
| National education policy | 0 | | |
| Personal language education background | 6 | B1-HK, B4-VN, B5-CN, B6-CN, B7-CN, B8-JP | "I study Chinese in Japan, and the main driving force behind this is the impetus given by my family...." (B8-JP) |
| Compatible with both | 2 | B3-BK, B2-IN | "Our country implements a multilingual education policy, and my language growth environment since childhood has been English and my native language." (B2-IN) |

(Refer to Figure 1)

Table 3. Regional Differences in Language Practice: A Comparison of Usage Proportions.

| Country/Region | Proportion of native language usage | The balanced proportion of bilingualism | Percentage of complete English usage |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Chinese mainland (n = 3) | 80% | 20% | 0% |
| Hong Kong (n = 1) | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Japan (n = 1) | 60% | 40% | 0% |
| Others (n = 3) | 67% | 33% | 0% |

(Refer to Figure 2)

Table 4. Affective Experiences in Language Use: Confidence, Belonging, and More.

| Topic | Mention frequency | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| "confidence" | 4 | B1-HK; B2-ID; B3-PK; B6-CN; | "I am most confident when using Cantonese, while English makes me feel constrained." (B1-HK) |
| "Introverted" | 5 | B1-HK; B4-VN; B5-CN; B6-CN; B7-CN | "When I communicate in English, I am introverted." (B7-CN) |
| "Sense of belonging" | 3 | B2-ID; B5-CN; B8-JP | "Expressing emotions in my native language gives me a sense of belonging." (B8-JP) |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|--------------|--|
| "Embarrass" | 2 | B4-VN; B5-CN | "using English at home would be seen as embarrassing", (B5-CN) |
| (Refer to Figure 2) | | | |

Table 5. Forms of Familial Involvement in Language Education: A Thematic Overview.

| Types of Attitudes | Mention frequency | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Emotional encouragement | 6 | B1-HK; B2-ID; B5-CN; B6-CN; B7-CN; B8-JP | "My family encouraged me to attend a Chinese school." (B8-JP) |
| Resource provision | 2 | B4-VN; B8-JP | "My parents bought me a bilingual learning software." (B4-VN) |
| Economic support | 1 | B3-BK | "My family sponsored my study in the UK." |
| oppose | 0 | 0 | |
| (Refer to Figure 3) | | | |

Table 6. Emotional and Sensory Metaphors in Describing Bilingual Learning.

| Topic | Select number of respondents | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| color | 3 | B3-BK; B4-VN; B6-CN | "I think bilingual learning is like red, because red represents joy." (B3-BK) |
| music | 5 | B1-HK; B2-ID; B5-CN; B7-CN; B8-JP | "Different languages are like different tones in music." (B1-HK) |
| food | 1 | B5-CN | "...It's just like I'm savoring two different flavors of food." |
| (Refer to Figure 4) | | | |

Table 7. Comparative Analysis of School Resource Support Across Regions.

| Country/Region | The proportion of school resources that can be supported | The proportion of unsupported resources in schools |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Chinese mainland (n=3) | 10% | 90% |
| Hong Kong (n=1) | 0% | 100% |
| Japan (n=1) | 10% | 90% |
| Others (n=3) | 45% | 55% |
| (Refer to Figure 5) | | |

Table 8. Respondent Perspectives on the Priority of Language Skills vs. Cultural Understanding.

| Topic | Select number of respondents | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Language skills are prioritized. | 2 | B1-HK; B5-CN; | "No matter how good a student's grammar is, if they can't communicate in English, it's still a failure." (B5-CN) |
| Cultural understanding takes priority. | 5 | B2-ID; B3-PK; B6-CN; B7-CN; B8-JP | "Language is a tool, but culture is the soul, just as music needs different notes to be harmonious." (B2-ID) |

| | | | |
|--|---|--------|-----------------------------------|
| Equally important (Refer to Figure 6) | 1 | B4-VN; | "The two are in balance." (B4-VN) |
|--|---|--------|-----------------------------------|

Table 9. Identified Topics in Language Acquisition Discourse: Frequencies and Participant Quotes.

| Topic | Mention frequency | Cover respondents (B1-B8) | Representative original sentences (example) |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| "(language) environment" | 6 | B1-HK, B2-IN, B5-CN, B6-CN, B7-CN, B8-JP | "The language environment will facilitate my process of understanding language input." (B2-IN) |
| "practice" | 2 | B3-BK, B7-CN | "I will promote my second language learning by watching foreign language movies." (B7-CN) |
| "multilingual learning" | 2 | B2-IN, B4-VN | "Learning a language is not a single process. Learning multiple languages yields better results." (B2-IN) |

(Refer to Figure 7)

Interview Questions:

- 1) Opening and Background Information
 - a) Please briefly introduce your educational background.
 - b) How widespread is bilingual education in your country/region? Which educational stages does it mainly cover (kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, universities)?
 - c) What bilingual education program have you participated in: immersion, transitional, or another model? What is the basis for choosing this model?
- 2) Policy and Implementation
 - a) How are the bilingual courses arranged in your country?
 - b) What are the goals of the bilingual education policy in your country/region? Is there a tendency towards "additive" or "subtractive" approaches?
 - c) Does your country/region have any new policy reforms?
- 3) Learning Experience and Daily Practice
 - a) Recall a typical bilingual learning scenario in your day: how do you use two languages in the classroom, after-class exercises, or in daily life?
 - b) Which language do you prefer to express emotions or complex viewpoints? Why?
 - c) What positive impacts do you believe mastering multilingual skills (such as three or more languages) have on you? Are there any negative effects? Or what are the main challenges?
 - d) Have you ever experienced a situation where two languages "clash" (confuse grammar/vocabulary)? Can you provide an example?
 - e) Can you recall how teachers dealt with students' difficulties in understanding subject knowledge due to language barriers during your student days? Was native language support in teaching allowed?
 - f) Do you believe that the bilingual educational resources provided by the school (teachers, teaching materials, extracurricular activities) are sufficient to support your learning?
- 4) Cultural Identity and Social Influence
 - a) When using different languages, do you feel like you are "switching identities"? (For example, becoming more confident/reserved, more rational/emotional, etc.)

- b) Has bilingualism changed your relationship with your family or community? (For example, native language communication with elders, intergenerational cultural differences)
 - c) How do you understand the cultural conflicts behind two languages? Have you ever experienced contradictions in values or habits?
 - 5) Technology and External Support
 - a) Which technical tools do you use to assist in bilingual learning? (Such as translation software, language apps, bilingual podcasts, etc.)
 - b) What is your family's attitude towards your bilingual learning: supportive, neutral, or opposed? What specific assistance have they provided?
 - c) Have non-school communities (such as online groups, language exchange partners) had a significant impact on your learning?
 - 6) Harvest and Reflection
 - a) What unexpected opportunities or advantages has bilingualism brought you? (Such as travel, making friends, career opportunities, etc.)
 - b) Have you ever been in a "dilemma" situation due to bilingual abilities? (For example, being forced to act as a translator, being labeled with a specific cultural identity)
 - c) If you were to describe the significance of bilingual learning to you in one sentence, what would you say?
 - 7) Suggestions for the education system
 - a) How do you wish the school to improve the bilingual teaching method? (For example, increasing practical scenarios, reducing examination pressure, etc.)
 - b) What is the one piece of advice you would most like to share with someone considering choosing bilingual learning?
 - c) Do you believe that bilingual education should focus more on "language skills" or "cultural understanding"? Why?
 - 8) Open-ended question
 - a) How do you hope to utilize your bilingual abilities in the future? Are you concerned that one language might gradually be forgotten?
 - b) If you were to use a food/music/color as a metaphor for bilingual learning, what would you choose? And why?
 - c) Do you have any other bilingual learning stories that you would like to share but have not been asked about?
 - 9) Qualitative Interview Transcription
- Participant Information
 ID: B8-JP (Anonymized)
 Nationality: Japan
 Age: 20
 Language Background: Japanese (mother tongue), Chinese (early bilingual education), English (university level)
 Interview Date: February 18, 2025
 Interview Information
 Method: In-person interview
 Duration: 1 hour
 Location: A student apartment
 Equipment: iPad recording app
 00:00-02:30
 Q: Thank you for participating! Could you briefly introduce your educational background?

A: I was born in Japan. I attended a Chinese school for primary school, so I can speak Chinese. I studied in regular Japanese schools from junior high school to high school, and then entered a British university where I use English in my daily life.

02:31-05:15

Q: How widespread is bilingual education in your country/region? At which educational stages is it mainly offered?

A: Bilingual education in Japanese public schools is not very common. English is taught as a foreign language from primary school, but it is not the language of instruction. International schools and some private schools offer bilingual programs, but they are rare in the regular education system.

05:16-07:45

Q: Why did you choose to attend a Chinese bilingual school?

A: Due to my family's cultural background and the importance of learning Chinese, I participated in a bilingual program at a Chinese school during primary school, mainly using both Chinese and Japanese.

07:46-10:20

Q: How are bilingual courses arranged in Japan?

A: Bilingual courses are mostly found in international schools, private schools, or special language programs. Public schools only teach English as a subject.

10:21-13:00

Q: Is the goal of Japan's bilingual education policy "additive" or "subtractive"?

A: The goal is to improve English proficiency, but it is "subtractive" because students' daily lives are mainly in Japanese, and they lack natural opportunities to use English.

13:01-15:30

Q: Are there any new reforms in Japan's bilingual education policy?

A: In recent years, Japanese universities have increased English-taught courses, and some schools have tried immersive English education, but the overall system still relies on traditional grammar teaching.

15:31-18:00

Q: Could you describe a typical bilingual usage scenario in your daily life?

A: For example, I use English at university, Japanese for daily communication, and Chinese with family or friends.

18:01-20:15

Q: Which language do you prefer to express emotions or complex ideas? Why?

A: I use Japanese for emotional expression (my native language feels more natural), and English for academic discussions (influenced by my university education).

20:16-22:45

Q: What are the positive impacts of mastering multiple languages on you? Are there any challenges?

A: Positive impacts include cross-cultural communication and information access; challenges mainly include language confusion (such as grammar conflicts).

22:46-25:00

Q: Have you ever experienced language conflicts? Please give an example.

A: Yes, when switching between Japanese and English, I often confuse sentence structures (such as Japanese subject-object-verb vs. English subject-verb-object).

25:01-27:30

Q: How did teachers handle language barriers during your school years? Was it allowed to use the native language for support?

A: Japanese teachers mainly taught English through textbooks, with limited practical communication, and other foreign language support was also limited.

27:31-30:00

Q: Are the bilingual educational resources in schools sufficient to support learning?

A: No, traditional teaching methods are dominant, and there are insufficient practical opportunities.

30:01-32:15

Q: Do you feel an "identity switch" when using different languages?

A: Yes, English is more direct and rational, while Japanese is more indirect and polite.
(Identity recognition differences)

32:16-34:45

Q: Has your bilingual ability changed your relationship with your family or community?

A: I use Japanese with Japanese friends, English with international friends, and a mix of Japanese and Chinese with family.

34:46-37:00

Q: How do you understand the cultural conflicts behind languages? Have you experienced value contradictions?

A: Cultural conflicts are reflected in communication styles, such as the indirectness of Japanese and the directness of English, which may lead to misunderstandings.

37:01-39:30

Q: What technological tools do you use to assist with bilingual learning? A: Translation software, language learning apps, and bilingual podcasts.

39:31-42:00

Q: How does your family view your bilingual learning? What kind of support do they offer?

A: My family is very supportive. They encouraged me to attend a Chinese school during primary school and supported my study abroad in the UK.

42:01-44:15

Q: Do non-school communities (such as online communities) have a significant impact on your learning?

A: Online language exchange partners have been very helpful in improving my language skills.

44:16-46:30

Q: What unexpected opportunities have your bilingual abilities brought you?

A: It's convenient for me to communicate with others, especially to find the job.

46:31-48:45

Q: Have you ever been in a "dilemma" situation due to bilingual abilities? (For example, being forced to act as a translator, being labeled with a specific cultural identity)

A: Yep, sometimes, I feel pressured when I translated or explained cultural differences.

48:46-50:30

Q: Summarize in one sentence the significance of bilingual learning to you.

A: "Bilingual ability expands opportunities and connects different cultures."

50:31-52:45

Q: What improvements do you hope schools will make to bilingual teaching methods?

A: There should be more practical scenarios (such as conversation classes) rather than just focusing on grammar and exams.

52:46-54:30

Q: What advice do you have for those considering bilingual learning?

A: Immerse yourself, because language environment is very important.

54:31-56:00

Q: Should bilingual education focus more on "language skills" or "cultural understanding"?

A: Both need to be balanced. A lack of cultural understanding will affect the natural use of the language.

56:01-58:30

Q: How do you hope to utilize your bilingual abilities in the future? Are you concerned that one language might gradually be forgotten?

A: I hope to use them in communication of my job in the future.

58:31-60:00

Q: If you were to use a food/music/color as a metaphor for bilingual learning, what would you choose? And why?

A: I think it just like the music, I means playing an instrument.

Q: I see, it's really interesting, thank you for your patient reply, you help me a lot!

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