

Development of English Language Education in Ethnic Minority Schools in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

GAO Youhan (GOIHAN)
Ochanomizu University, Japan

Abstract

Since the establishment of the People's Republic, China has undergone various changes in language policy, both in standardization of indigenous languages of ethnic minority groups and enhancement of foreign language education. Until 2001, bilingual education through Mandarin Chinese and Mongolian had been the main focus of language education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. However, following the introduction of compulsory English Language Education in all the regions of the nation in 2001, little attention has been given to the issue of foreign language and trilingual education within ethnic minority schools in China. First of all, this paper is aimed at reviewing the existing policy of ethnic minority language education and the English language policy in China. Second, an analysis of a questionnaire survey will show the actual situation and the problems arising in English Language Education in Inner Mongolia. Third, an overburden in language education, the unsatisfactory educational materials and learner's preference for mother tongue use in the English class will be observed. Ultimately, the author suggests that a more interventionist language policy remains essential to overcome the major issues encountered in language education in China's ethnic minority schools.

Keywords: Bilingual education, China's ethnic minority education, English language education, ethnic minority school, trilingual education

Introduction

The People's Republic of China (hereinafter, China) is an ethnically diverse country, with around 55 different ethnic minorities making up 8% of the population. In fact, regions which are home to large bodies of ethnic minorities are designated as autonomous areas, including 5 autonomous regions and 30 autonomous prefectures. The autonomous areas are granted freedom in their choice of religious practice, and in the writing and speaking of the language they use. Accordingly, these regions are also provided with ethnic minority schools.

After adopting a policy of Reform and Opening in 1978, China gradually shifted from its socialist framework, towards an economic system increasingly based on the free market. Consequently in 2001, China joined the WTO, and its rapid industrialization continues unabated. Nonetheless, the sudden economic boom has caused wide gaps in regional wealth throughout China, and figures from the *China Statistical Yearbook 2007* have shown that of the 31 province-level administrative regions (23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions and 3 municipalities) in China, a ten-fold gap had opened up between the per capita GDP of the

richest, Shanghai, and the poorest, Guizhou. Furthermore, the Autonomous Regions are at a geographical disadvantage in terms of poor trading locations, making the issue of the widening economic gap with other regions a serious one. Regrettably, these regional gaps are predicted to increase exponentially in the future.

Specifically, this paper focuses on ethnic Mongolian schools in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (hereinafter, Inner Mongolia). Before English language education¹ (hereinafter, ELE) became compulsory in all junior secondary education in 1992, most of those schools had no English course. However, less than ten years later, it was determined in 2001 that elementary school children in grade 3 (in some schools from grade 1) and upward should also learn English at school. Since then, much hope has been placed on the potential that learning English will have for economic development in the regions. This educational change is highly valued by a variety of major newspapers including regional ones such as the *Inner Mongolia Daily*, and described as ‘minority education to meet the globalization needs’, ‘historical development in minority education’, and ‘reaching an unprecedented high level’, etc. However, when the author visited schools around Mongolia, students always said “I couldn’t keep up with the contents now”, “I like English, but it is hard to understand” while teachers complained about Mongolian students’ low level of English. What is the actual situation of ELE in Mongolian schools then? How is ELE implemented in minority schools in Inner Mongolia? How is the implementation of ELE affecting minority education? This paper aims to review the existing policy and actual situation of ELE and to explore how ELE effects minority education through the evidence gathered in the field work research.

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Ethnic Minority Education

The Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region was established in 1947, and its total land area is a massive 1.183 million km². According to the 5th National Census, its total population is 23.32 million, of which the majority is Han Chinese (79%), with Mongolian next at 17%. The area is also home to other ethnic groups, such as the Manchu, the Hui, the Korean, the Daur, the Ewenki, the Orochin and the Tibetan, but recent years have seen a sudden shift in population, with an ever increasing number of Han Chinese. In parallel with this population shift, the scope in which the Mongolian language is used has declined, and already 12% of the ethnic Mongolian population is not able to speak Mongolian (Hurelbaatar, 1997). The ‘Inner Mongolia Project for the Mongolian Language’ was established in 2004 in an attempt to improve the condition of Mongolian.

China’s education system is centralized, and is unified throughout the country in a 6-3-3-4 year system. Ethnic Mongolian schools in Inner Mongolia, therefore, also follow this system. The level of compulsory education is high compared to other regions, with figures showing that 1,563,790 children were enrolled in elementary school in 2006, and the enrolment rate for

¹ The system allows schools to teach other foreign languages. Since, however, the vast majority of schools opted for English, this paper refers to “English language education.”

elementary school is around 98%². The dropout rate is just 0.04%, and 99% of the elementary school students continue to junior high school, which is higher than national average levels. Half of the students who graduate from junior high school continue onto high school, and 14% of these students will attend university or vocational college. The autonomous region has two major types of schools: Chinese schools, for Han Chinese children, and ethnic Mongolian schools, designed to cater for the Mongolian population. Of all the ethnic Mongolian schools, 7% have adopted an “Extra Mongolian Language Classes” policy. In the ethnic minority schools, bilingual education has been practiced since the 1950s, when the ‘Bilingual Education Policy’ was introduced, which facilitated teaching in both Chinese and the relevant ethnic language. In addition to this, then, 2001 saw ELE added to the elementary curriculum. One of the political objectives sought by the ‘Bilingual Education Policy’ was to encourage greater unification throughout China through a common language, thus making it easier for the central government to manage and control ethnic minorities. However, much previous research has highlighted the difficulties of bilingual education in minority schools (Okamoto, 1999; Ogawa, 2001; Shoji, 2003).

The proportion of the population receiving education is an issue of national concern, and Inner Mongolia – which has a comparatively low level of un-enrolled children – is no exception to a trend which has seen the rapid establishment of Chinese schools, which are able to secure both teaching staff and teaching materials quickly and easily, in an attempt to increase the number of students going on to the higher levels of education. Policy measures have indeed managed to encourage growth in the enrollment ratios; the flip side of this seems to be a drop in levels of interest in, and loyalty to, education taught by using the Mongolian language.

According to 2007 figures, the children attending Mongolian schools represented 34% of the total ethnic Mongolian population of school age, and over half of these children were not being taught any classes in Mongolian³. At present, more and more Mongolian children are opting to attend Han Chinese schools, for such reasons as the burden of a bilingual education in both Mongolian and Chinese, the lack of scope for using the Mongolian language, and the overwhelming dominance of the Chinese language at the junior and senior high school stages. Learners are determining that, since the importance of Chinese only increases the time they spend at schools, they should only learn Chinese in the first place. Indeed, the subjects taught in Mongolian at higher education levels are extremely limited, with almost no opportunity in the natural sciences. As such, it seems that learners who are keen to progress to further education would do well to equip themselves with proficiency in Chinese from the earliest stage.

ELE in China Today

English was first taught in China in 1862, when the first specialist foreign language school

² *An Overview of Statistics on Education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 2006/2007*, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Education Bureau.

³ *An Overview of Statistics on Education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 2007/2008*, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Education Bureau.

was opened. Until then, English was taught in a limited number of urban schools, until the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949. As this meant the advent of a socialist system, most foreign language education focused on Russian, although English was re-introduced to urban junior high schools in 1958, as a means of learning science and technology. During the Cultural Revolution the use of foreign languages was strictly limited, meaning that English was no longer taught. After the Cultural Revolution, however, and with a series of reforms seeking to open China up to the outside world, ELE experienced a boom in popularity. In 1980, Shanghai, Tianjin and Beijing all introduced English into their elementary curriculums in quick succession, and in 1992, as a part of the reforms designed to ensure nine years of compulsory education for all Chinese, foreign languages were introduced as a compulsory part of the junior high school curriculum. Although the language could be chosen freely, in reality there was a strong focus on English. In 2001, as part of the New Curriculum Reform, English teaching was introduced into the elementary school curriculum (see Table 1), and at present China is home to an extremely high level of English language teaching. For an example we can turn to data from the 1980s, examined by Kurihara (2001), which compared the average number of English words used in English textbooks in China and in Japan. Whilst the average total for the 6 Japanese textbooks considered was 13,307 words, the Chinese textbook featured three times that number, at 40,929. Moreover, since 2000, Chinese university students have been required to pass the College English Test, CET-4 in order to graduate (with a higher level, CET-6, also optionally taken by many university students). If students wish to continue to Graduate School, or to study English as a major, they are required to attain the highest level possible. Throughout university education in general, the learning of languages is considered important, and many students opt to take English classes, studying for around 300 hours a year, and taking classes taught in English (Kasuya, 1999).

Table 1. Terms of Language Education in China's Compulsory Education (after 2001)

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Elementary school					Middle school			High school			University				
	Compulsory education															
	The terms of learning English and Chinese in Chinese schools															
	The terms of learning English, Chinese and Mongolian in Mongolian schools															

However, as noted previously, it is certainly not the case that anyone and everyone is able to enjoy this kind of high level ELE. In the Autonomous Regions, greater emphasis is placed upon learning Chinese, which functions as a common language between ethnic minorities, than on 'foreign' languages. Many regions have no history of foreign language education, and are in a stage of development when compared with urban schools, many of which have over 50 years of accumulated know-how in teaching English. The following section reports findings on the

current situation of ELE and the problems faced by the ethnic Mongolian schools within the trilingual education system in Inner Mongolia.

Review of Previous Research: Bilingualism and Third Language Learning

It is recognized that the purpose and the shape of bilingual education is neither clear nor stable, and it always brings about the assimilation to the majority language, like a transitional language education (Baker, 1996). This ambiguity is revealed in minority education in China (Shoji, 2003), too. Bilingual education in China is formulated from the minority language emphasis. In fact, it has become a tool to expand Mandarin (Shoji, 2003). Therefore, the bilingual education process in China cannot exert a positive effect on minority education, neither can it maintain a bilingual education strictly.

So far, many studies have been done on bilingual education, and the results have been used in the field of language education in various forms. However, there are few studies based on bilingual education which meanwhile deepen the topic to trilingual or multilingual education. The studies overseas about trilingual education focus more on the education for immigrants (Mitchell, 2001; Lamarre & Dagenais, 2004). Although these studies refer to the minority education and trilingual education, the research subjects and social situation are different in the case of China. The trilingual education in China is not implemented towards immigrant but minority societies. The trilingual education in my study refers to Mongolian as mother language, Chinese as national language and English as foreign language. The research studies in China deal more with concept arrangement or ideological discourse (Wuliji, 2005; Ge, 2003; Tian, 2001), while the actual situation is seldom examined. In this paper, I will focus on ELE as a third language education within ethnic minority education in China.

To learn a second language is difficult, but there are many merits of being a bilingual. It takes a long time to reach a native level in the second language learning process, and subjective learning is essential for acquiring the academic skill (Cummins & Nakajima, 1985). Based on this result, Uchida (1999) indicates that a second language cannot be acquired as naturally as the first language, it needs subjective and systematic learning, and it is difficult to learn when the target language is not communicative. However, as Cummins and Danesi (2005) have indicated, bilinguals present higher metalinguistic awareness than monolinguals, and bilingual students are quicker to acquire a third language than monolingual students a second. Therefore, although bilingual learners have considerable potential for learning a third language, as a third language learning is added to a heavily burdened bilingual learning process, there will still be great difficulties.

These difficulties are expected to arise more and more in minority education – when English is not needed for daily communication, to learn English as a third language through a second language as the instruction medium is rather difficult. This has been pointed out by Liu (2006), who argued about the difficulty of learning English grammar when English is the third language. Even if a bilingual has the potential to learn the third language more easily, the training cannot be achieved if the curriculum or the methodology is not appropriate in formal education.

ELE in Mongolian Schools in Inner Mongolia: Research Findings

So far the case of ELE in China has been examined in broad terms. However, after ELE became compulsory in China, little attention has been given to the issue of foreign language and trilingual education in China's ethnic minority schools. In order to consider the impacts of current ELE and identify key problems faced by the ethnic Mongolian school system, a questionnaire survey and field work research was carried out in March and August in 2007. An analysis of the current situation followed by a discussion of the impact of ELE and trilingual education system will be given below.

Participants

A questionnaire survey was carried out in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia in Mongolian school A (189 participants) in March and Mongolian school B (208 participants) in August 2007 where responses were collected from a total of 397 valid respondents (209 boys, 188 girls). The survey approached a total of 12 classes (6 classes in each school) in the ninth and tenth grades, and the participants were from pastoral areas (37%) and countryside (42%) and towns (21%) throughout Inner Mongolia.

Instrument

The research examines the coverage of ELE, Mongolian students' motivation and awareness of English learning, and satisfaction with current English classes. The questionnaire asked about the starting grade of ELE; the medium of instruction in English class; the time spent on language course review; the extent of satisfaction with English class and the reasons for it; and the extent of satisfaction with English course materials and the reasons for it.

Actual Situations Seen in the Research

(1) The Low Spread and the Variation of ELE

In 1993, the Inner Mongolia Bureau established experimental courses for ethnic Mongolian students in the Foreign Language Faculties at the Inner Mongolia Normal University and the Tongliao Ethnic Normal College (now Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities). The courses were recognized officially in 1997, constituting therefore the establishment of the first English Language Teacher Training Course. The year 2001 saw ELE added to the regular elementary curriculum as part of the New Curriculum Reform in China, and it highly and quickly spread in urban areas. It was determined that elementary school children in grade 3 (in some schools from grade 1) and upward should also learn English in schools in Inner Mongolia. Compared to the 100% of coverage in urban areas, Inner Mongolia's situation is quite different (Table 2). And these figures vary across the areas throughout Inner Mongolia — the proportion of urban areas is higher than that of village and plains. Despite this, the number of teaching staff capable in English remains insufficient, and ELE in most Mongolian schools is carried out – by necessity – in Chinese, meaning that the popularization of ELE in villages and plains is falling behind.

Table 2. The Starting Grade of the English Language in Inner Mongolia

The year to start learning English	Before elementary school	From elementary school	From middle school	After middle school
Percentage	1.7%	14%	41%	42%

(2) Unclear Standard of Medium Language

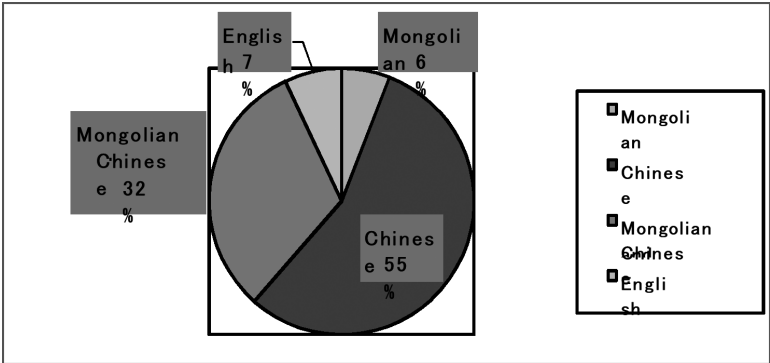


Figure 1. The Language of Instruction Used in English Class

As the pie chart above shows, Chinese medium or Chinese-Mongolian medium English class is the most popular in ethnic schools nowadays. In the previous section, we have seen that Mongolian language education and language use has declined within the bilingual education environment; however, it seems the addition of ELE has rendered the situation worse than before. Because of the unclear standards of ELE, many inconsistencies now exist. If we look at the pie chart, we can see that most of the English classes are conducted in the Chinese language but not in the mother tongue. What's more, over half of the students give up their English course in the early stage of high school; some of the reasons for giving up are: "I couldn't understand Chinese completely, so I couldn't understand an English class", "I am not good at Chinese grammar, so I couldn't understand the teacher's explanation of English grammar in Chinese", "I didn't have enough time to review English at middle school, so I couldn't catch up with the contents now", "I like English, but it is hard to understand. Especially for some of the grammar, we even haven't learnt them in Chinese grammar, nor in Mongolian grammar". Therefore, we can simply conclude that there are many inconsistencies among the three kinds of language education in ethnic schools in Inner Mongolia. The shortage of Mongolian language classes leads students to not learn enough grammar knowledge of Mongolian, and this matter directly influences the understanding of other language classes such as Chinese and English, or even subjects beside languages. Therefore, this means that, in practice, the majority of ethnic Mongolian students have to master the Chinese language completely in advance of learning English, in order to be able to understand the teachers' explanations in English class.

Much effort was devoted to making English compulsory, but not to considering a proper way to teach minority students. As a result, the schools had no qualified teaching staff or relevant teaching materials, which meant that, as an interim measure, English language came to be taught in these schools via the students' second language, i.e. Chinese. If students are to be taught English through Chinese as a medium, then it is inevitable that children attending solely Chinese schools will be in a better position in terms of mastering English, and this could in turn lead to their enjoying more employment opportunities in the future than their peers who graduate from ethnic Mongolian schools.

(3) Overburden of Language Education

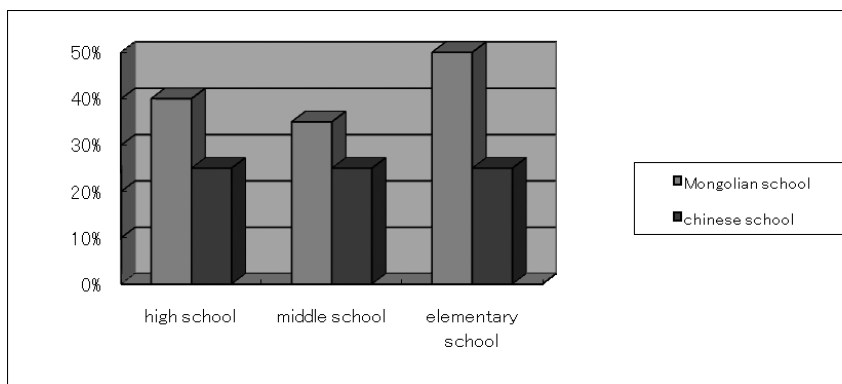


Figure 2. Language Class Proportion in Mongolian Schools

Together with the delay in the establishment of an infrastructure for ELE, such as securing sufficient teaching staff and developing appropriate teaching materials, there remains another issue for the learner: namely, an overburden in language education. Previously, amongst ethnic Mongolian schools, Mongolian and Chinese language classes were covering around 30% of the overall school timetable, but with the addition of English, this bias towards language learning has become even more pronounced, with around 40% - 50% of all class time being allocated to language education (see Figure 2). Therefore, many ethnic Mongolian schools in order to secure the number of hours needed for Chinese and English classes have reduced class time dedicated to the teaching of the Mongolian language. Specifically, the overburden of language classes is more evident amongst Mongolian students and causes a shortage of non-language subjects. The students who participated in this research, declared that they use from half an hour to 2 hours for reviewing their English course after class, and this time takes up 30% to 70% of their overall review time.

The advantages for ethnic minority populations to learn Chinese are undeniable. Accordingly, this creates the basis for closer communication and exchange with other regions, thus assisting in economic development. Equally, proficiency in English can contribute to the development of Autonomous Regions, and has the potential to become a useful tool in facilitating greater participation in the global economic market. However, if ethnic minority schools continue in

following the current trend in how education is provided, we will never see how ELE could be a valuable tool in narrowing gaps between regions.

Discussion: Towards the Improvement of ELE in Ethnic Mongolian Schools

In the previous section, we examined what the actual situation of ELE is in Inner Mongolia through a questionnaire analysis, and reported that ethnic minority schools are facing new problems and challenges. English language was introduced to the school curriculum without ethnic Mongolian schools having the opportunity to make the necessary preparations, and they are finding themselves unable to teach it properly. In order for ethnic Mongolian schools to function as educational institutions that are equipped to face the two biggest problems facing the region – namely the regional economic gap and the conservation of ethnic identity – they will have to embrace trilingual education in Mongolian, Chinese and English. In the subsections below, we will consider the prerequisites for the improvement of the ELE system applied in ethnic minority schools, which can also be part of the prerequisites for the realization for the trilingual education in ethnic schools. One of these is a common appreciation of the importance of Mongolian language education, and the other is the development of methods to successfully implement such trilingual education.

Strengthening of Mongolian Language Education

It is said that the clearer the purpose for learning a language, the easier it is to be successful in acquiring that language. In the US, bilingual education has been available to immigrants since the 1960s, and whilst the face of bilingual education has changed over the years, moving from a focus on maintaining the native language to obtaining the second language, the US has a firm policy of supporting the bilingual capabilities of all school children, including the children of the English speaking majority (Suefuji, 2002, p. 84). For Chinese ethnic minorities, over 50 years has passed since the implementation of the ‘Bilingual Education Policy,’ and the Chinese language ability of the ethnic population has increased, which appears to have generated a skepticism towards the significance of minority populations’ learning minority languages, considering the overall dominance of the Chinese language. Suefuji (2002) refers to the “recovery of humanity” that learning one’s mother tongue can engender (p. 162). Equally, the Education Committee of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress has given “valuing oneself,” “self-esteem,” and “sense of pride” as reasons for learning one’s native language (Cummins & Danesi, 2005). However, for many ethnic schools in China, fluctuations in the number of students are dependent on the economic value apportioned to their ethnic language, and therefore, it is not enough to simply appeal to the fact that the language concerned is a native one. Thus, in order to improve the situation in ethnic schools today, the reasons for ethnic minorities to maintain their native language skills has to be stated clearly. An interventionist language policy designed to help conserve native languages needs to be introduced at an early stage, having consulted case studies in other countries in which ability in the native language has been successfully maintained.

Developing ELE Methods within Trilingual Education

Without effective trilingual education there is the danger that schools will produce children who are not proficient in any language and any school course. In order to avoid such an eventuality, we can say that the establishment of a framework for effective trilingual education is necessary. The teaching undertaken at ethnic Mongolian schools today is based on a nationally unified foundation, to which certain subjects, unique to ethnic schools, have been added, including the Chinese language. As such, learners can easily feel overwhelmed. It is not, however, the case that trilingual education per se is unfeasible to achieve. If implemented systematically it can stimulate the cognitive development of learners, and other benefits can include increased abilities to empathize with other cultures. There are arguments in the field of trilingual research about whether second and third languages should be introduced only after the first language has been acquired, or whether it is most effective to teach multiple languages concurrently. Regrettably, there is no sign of a conclusive resolution any time soon. Yet, there are no arguments to deny the value of multilingual capability. In addition, as Cummins and Danesi (2005) have indicated, it is said that bilingual students are quicker to acquire a third language than monolingual students a second (p. 88). What this seems to imply is that trilingual education in ethnic Mongolian schools could represent a number of potential advantages. At present, however, the realization of trilingual education in ethnic Mongolian schools looks unlikely, given their current curriculum. In other words, measures are needed to adapt the education system in order that trilingual education might be effectively realized, and to make sure that the development of teaching methods is appropriate to trilingual education.

Research Limitations

This study aimed at drawing an overall picture of ELE, and to find the problems faced by minority students in Inner Mongolia, as it is a new research area. Through the questionnaire survey, the actual situation is examined and problems are explored; however, how ELE affects Mongolian students at every certain stage, and how teachers and students become aware of these effects, etc., are still areas that need researching. Together with the insights gained in this paper, the author would like to collect more quantitative and qualitative data on the current situation in ELE and trilingual education in ethnic Mongolian schools, and examine more detailed proposals for language policy in this area, keeping a firm eye on other international examples.

Conclusion

Through the questionnaire survey, the low spread, the variation, and the unclear standard of medium-of-instruction language in ELE are explored. Meanwhile, the overburden of the language education caused by ELE in Inner Mongolia is also examined. All these results show an immature ELE system in ethnic Mongolian schools, and this not only means that Mongolian students cannot learn English properly, but also indicates the minority education is affected badly by this educational change.

For ethnic minorities, the chance to obtain linguistic skills represents an important opportunity for social advancement and economic development. Nonetheless, prioritizing the economic aspect above everything else, and focusing only on those languages which will be effective in that sense, could well lead minorities, *vis-à-vis* difficulties of maintaining their own traditional culture, to lose their cultural identity and traditional ethnic characteristics. Sadly, this is a common threat that nowadays minorities worldwide are constantly facing. As observed in this paper, Inner Mongolia is seeing a decline in the scope of usage of the Mongolian language, and an increasing focus on the English language, both happening within the context of an environment dominated by the Chinese language. The need to maintain Mongolian language skills is thus being called into question. This phenomenon, then, of the voluntary forfeiture of the ethnic language, is likely to continue as long as it remains perceived in terms of financial gains in the free market economy.

The aims of multicultural policies should not entail forced assimilation of the ethnic minorities into the majority of the population, but rather create a framework of education in which minorities can maintain and conserve their own cultures. There is, therefore, an ever greater need to consider the voices of the young members of ethnic minorities in the future, as it is they who will be responsible for continuing their cultural traditions.

Effective ELE within a trilingual education program, which can both encourage economic development amongst minority communities and preserve the unique characteristics of ethnic communities, is necessary if we are to ensure the survival of diverse ethnic cultures in Inner Mongolia.

References

- Baker, Colin. (1996). *Foundation of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. (Oka, Hideo Trans.). Tokyo: Daishukan Shoten (Original work published 1993).
- Cummins, Jim & Danesi, Marcel. (2005). *Heritage languages: The development and denial of Canada's linguistic resources*, Our Schools/ Our Selves Education Foundation. (Nakajima, Kazuko & Takagaki, Toshiyuki Trans.). Tokyo: Akashi Shoten (Original work published 1990).
- Cummins, Jim & Nakajima, Kazuko. (1985). Toronto hoshukou shougakusei no nigengo no kouzo [Structure of the Toronto supplementary school children capability in two languages]. In *Bairingararu baikarucharu kyoiku no genjyo to kadai* [The situation and challenges for bilingual and bicultural education] (pp. 143-179). Center for Research in International Education in Tokyo, Gakugei University.
- Ge, Xingzhi. (2003). On tri-lingual education. *Journal of Dali College*, 11, 83-88.
- Hurelbaater. (1997). Issues facing ethnic education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. In Tanaka, Katsuhiko (Ed.), *Language, nation and power*, (pp. 91-105). Tokyo: Shin Seisha.
- Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Education Bureau (2003). An Overview of Statistics on Education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 2006/2007.

- Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Education Bureau (2008). An Overview of Statistics on Education in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 2007/2008.
- Kasuya, Hiroshi. (1999). English language education in China. *Tokyo Kasei University Journal*, 39(1), 201-212.
- Kurihara, Masaru. (2001). Observations on English language education in Japan, Korea and China. *Comparative Cultural Research*, 54, 33-45.
- Lamarre, Patricia & Dagenais, Diane. (2004). Language practices of trilingual youth in two Canadian cities. In Hoffmann, Charlotte & Ytsma, Jehannes (Eds.), *Trilingualism in family, school and community* (pp. 53-74). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Liu, Ming. (2006). Trilingual learners' vocabulary learning strategies. *Journal of Qujing Normal University*, 25(5), 110-116.
- Mitchell, Katharyne. (2001). Education for democratic citizenship: Transnationalism, multiculturalism, and the limits of liberalism. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(1), 57-78.
- National Bureau of Statistics of China (2008). *China Statistical Yearbook 2007*.
- Ogawa, Yoshikazu. (2001). *Shakai shugi chugoku ni okeru shosuminzoku Kyoiku- 'Minzoku byodo' rinen no tenkai* [Ethnic minority education in socialist China: The development of the concept of ethnic equality]. Tokyo: Toshindo.
- Okamoto, Masakata. (1999). *Chugoku no shosuminzoku Kyoiku to gengo seisaku* [Ethnic minority education and language policy in China]. Tokyo: Shakai Hyoronsha.
- Shoji, Hiroshi. (2003). New aspects of ethnic minorities in China: The relationship with increasing Chinese language education. *National Museum of Ethnology Research Journal*, 27(4), 683-724.
- Suefuji, Mitsuko. (2002). *Amerika no bairingararu kyoiku – Atarashi shakai no kouchiku wo mezashite* [America's bilingual education: Towards the creation of a new society]. Tokyo: Toshindo.
- Tian, Jiale. (2001). The yesterday, today and tomorrow of trilingual teaching in Tibet. *Journal of Tibet University*, 16, 75-79.
- Uchida, Nobuko. (1999). Daini gengo gakushu ni okeru seijuku teki seiyaku [Mature constraint of second language learning]. In Shigeru Kiritani (Ed.), *Kotoba-no kakutoku* [Language Acquisition] (pp. 195-228). Kyoto: Minerva Shobo.
- Wuliji. (2005). An explanation of trilingual education of ethnics. *Guizhou Ethnic Studies*, 25(4), 181-184.