

Trilingual Education Models in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

YI, YAYUAN

EdD

THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

2014

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[Trilingual Education Model in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region]

by

YI, YAYUAN

A Thesis Submitted to

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for

the Degree of Doctor of Education

6 2014

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I, YI Yayuan, hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis, and the material presented in this thesis is my original work except those indicated in the acknowledgement. I further declare that I have followed the Institute's policies and regulations on Academic Honesty, Copyright, and Plagiarism in writing this thesis, and no material in this thesis has been published or submitted for a degree in this or other universities.

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ABSTRACT

Trilingual Education Models in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

by YI, Yayuan

for the degree of Doctor of Education

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Multilingualism is a growing trend around the world as local languages are complemented by national, regional, and international languages in education systems as policy makers respond to the forces and impacts of globalization. This study explores the implementation of trilingual education in three primary schools in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR) in the People's Republic of China (PRC). These schools are all Mongolian nationality primary schools located in different places in IMAR that aim to maintain the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Mongolians—one of the 55 officially-recognized ethnic minorities in the PRC—while also preparing the students to participate in the social, economic, and political activities of the country through strong propagation of standard Chinese. The third language is English, viewed by policy makers as an important tool to enable the PRC to play a prominent role in international affairs. The official documents at the state level, including the Constitution, give the minority groups freedom to use and develop their own languages while entitling them to learn Chinese and English. The implementation of these policies varies from place to place. In 2009, Adamson and Feng identified 4 models that are implemented in the minority area in PRC. The four models are namely the accretive model, balanced model, transitional model, and depreciative model. Using this typology as an analytical framework in this thesis, I take three Mongolian nationality primary schools as samples to analyze which model is implemented in each school, how it is implemented, and to find out and categorize major factors influencing trilingual education in IMAR into primary, secondary, and tertiary level factors. The thesis is divided into four major parts: the first part is to give background knowledge of trilingualism, and introduce and review successful

studies on trilingual models in western countries such as the USA, Canada, Belgium, Spain, and Italy. This is followed by Chinese minority language policy changes since 1949 and the status of trilingual education in PRC. The second part will introduce methodologies that are adapted in this study. The third part will discuss and describe each school by its context, curriculum, staff profile, teaching and learning activities, and outcomes. Two steps of analyses are done in this study. The first step draws on classroom observations, interviews, and analysis of curriculum documents as well as analyzing each school's trilingual model and how it is implemented within the context of each school. The second step combines these with the outside environment and major societal changes to capture a snapshot of how the school navigates, often conflicting policy streams and social, political, and economic forces. I distinguish the relevant model implemented in each school and their status and roles ascribed to Mongolian, Chinese, and English in pedagogical processes, and look at short-term and long-term outcomes of the teaching activities carried out in these schools. The last part of the thesis will summarize and discuss overall findings from these three schools, and attempt to summarize and categorize these schools' models and factors that impact these models. This last part concludes with a discussion of the facilitators and challenges for the sustainability of trilingual education in such environments.

Key words: Trilingual education; Trilingual education model; China; Mongolian; Chinese; English; Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region; Minority language policy; Minority language education; Accretive Model; Balanced Model

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IMAR	Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region
MNPS	Mongolian Nationality Primary School
MOI	Medium of Instruction
Min	Minimum
Max	Maximum

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Research Questions:

This hermeneutic study will explore and evaluate the additive trilingual education models in Mongolian National Primary Schools (MNPS) in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR), China. It will focus on Mongolian ethnic minority students, teachers, parents, stakeholders, and policy makers in MNPS, and their perceptions of the additive trilingual education policy implementation.

The aims and objectives of this project is to compare different additive trilingual education policy models implemented in IMAR in 3 MNPS located in different social economic status (SES) – geographic and demographic areas – in order to draw a picture of additive trilingual education models in IMAR, and to identify the sustaining factors that foster these models. My research questions are:

RQ1: What are the additive trilingual education models in MNPS in IMAR?

RQ2: How is additive trilingualism achieved in each model?

RQ3: What are the factors that affect these models?

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Minority Education and Language Policy

China has its own policies and practices related to minority language, culture, and rights (He, 2005; Kymlicka, 2005). In Chinese governmental policies regarding minority groups, *ronghe* (meaning fusion or an amalgamation) is frequently used to refer to the long historical process of communication and cultural exchange between

the minorities and majorities, which has caused the disappearance of minority languages, cultures, and knowledge (Mackerras, 1994). In China, bilingual or trilingual education has been partly determined by the Constitution of People's Republic of China (PRC) through the PRC's Regional Autonomy Law for Minority Nationalities. The Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Government of PRC is the agency of the State Council, which regulates all aspects of the education system in Mainland China. This includes compulsory basic education, vocational education, and tertiary education. The National State Council has issued several articles to enhance China's national, scientific, and cultural quality for minorities, and promote minority development and social progress, strengthening national unity, maintaining social stability, and safeguard minority areas.

Minority education in China has undergone constant change in the perspectives of politicians, administrators, educationalists and shifts in ideology, preference, and practice. Before 1949, many minorities were mostly living in the border areas of China, and had much less communication with the Han majority. Language policy usually reflects the tension and relationship between the Han majority and minorities. After 1949, up until now, the language policies towards minority languages can be divided into five phases, according to Lam (2005):

1. Egalitarian respect (1949-1956)
2. Unstable policy (1957-1965)
3. Suppression (1966-1976)
4. Restoration (1966-1976)
5. Bilingualism (1977-1990) (Lam, 2005. p 124).

These phases are based on studies from several scholars, namely Wang (1998a), He (1998), and Zhou (2003). The tension during these periods was basically whether to allow the minority to use and learn their mother language and at the same time provide them thorough education to learn Putonghua Chinese, or not to give them Putonghua education. I will use Putonghua and Chinese interchangeably. This was the case because Putonghua is a major language, widely used as a communicative tool in

the majority of society. Until now, the function of Putonghua has not changed so much in mainstream society. However, with the economic, political, and educational development, there are now different policy issues towards minority languages. These policies were originally made to meet the recent needs of the minority in order to enter mainstream society, as well as to maintain minority language and culture. Whether the reality is the case or not will be reflected to a certain extent in this study.

Before the establishment of the Chinese Republic of China, the policy of allowing minority publishing houses and establish minority schools was decided. This granted minority officials and government offices to use minority languages. This idea was re-confirmed by the Chinese Government in 1949.

In 1950, a national institute was founded to train personnel for minority linguistic work. This institute was called the Central Institute of Nationalities back then (now called the Central University of Nationalities). The Department of Linguistics started in 1951 at the Institute. Although Putonghua was not used nor taught widely in many minority areas in China at that time, especially in provinces like *Yunnan*, *Sichuan*, *Tibet*, *Guangxi*, and *Guizhou*, the requirement from the government to use Putonghua was already very clear. In the articles published, it was stated that if Putonghua was taught in the primary schools or media broadcasting then it should be the main dialect in the corresponding areas (State Language Commission, 1996, P. 15).

In 1952, the first Constitution of the Republic publicized that the ‘minority group has the freedom to use and develop its own language and script’ (He, 1998, pp. 70-71). In the same year, the State Council issued the ‘Guidelines for Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the People’s Republic of China’. In this guideline, it was decided for ‘all the autonomous governments to adopt the languages of all minority nationalities within their jurisdiction for the development of these minorities’ (Zhou M, 2003, P. 44). Additionally, these laws enabled the ethnic autonomous regions to self-govern with respect to the use of the home ethnic language.

In 1958, the *Hanyu Pinyin Scheme* was completed and taught among minorities.

When the minority languages were respected and recognized as important for them in order to develop their own community and form their own motherland, the Chinese majority believed at that time that the minority language must aim to be consistent with the *Hanyu Pinyin Scheme* (Zhou M, 2003, pp. 111-112).

During the period of the Cultural Revolution in China, which was from 1966-1976, minority languages were undermined, and considered to be backward and useless (He, 1998). In 1971, all ten Institutes of Nationalities were closed down, and a great number of minority teachers were heavily punished during the Revolution (Wang, 1998. P. 8). Repressive policies were established toward minority languages during that period of time. However, Mongolian, Tibetan, Kazak, and Yi were revived, but these languages were not allowed to develop further (Zhou M, 2003, pp. 77).

After the Cultural Revolution, minority language policy took a turn towards restoration. Many nationality institutions were reopened and articles were established to reaffirm the position of minority languages. One particular article, established in 1982, stated that ‘every ethnic group has the freedom to use and develop its own language and script and to maintain or change its own cultural practices’ (He, 1998, p.88; National People’s Congress, 1999, p. 6). Minority languages received a large amount of attention from the government during the 1980s. Several changes occurred with minority codification, and some new scripts of minorities were also recognized during that time (Lam, 2005).

By 1991, the situation of bilingualism among the minorities was becoming clearer to the government. In 1998, the term for ethnic minority was changed to *minzu* instead of nationalities. ‘The Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the People’s Republic of China’ was passed in 1984 and revised in 2001 (National People’s Congress, 2001; Ministry of Education, *n.d.a*).

Some relevant articles in this law are translated as follows:

Article 10. The autonomous offices in the autonomous ethnic areas are to safeguard

the freedom of ethnic groups to use and develop their languages and scripts and to maintain or change their cultural practices.

Article 21. In executing their duties autonomous offices to use one or more languages or scripts commonly used in the area; if several languages or scripts are used at the same time, they can use primarily the language or script of the ethnic minority group in that region.

Article 37. The schools (or classes) recruiting mainly minority learners should use textbooks in the minority language and teach in the minority language, if conditions allow for that; according to actual circumstances, in Chinese lessons, starting from lower primary or upper primary, Putonghua and standardized Chinese characters should be taught.

Article 47. The people's courts and prosecuting offices should use the languages commonly used in the local regions to review documents or judge cases one or more of the local languages or scripts should be used in legal documents, according to the needs, to protect the rights of citizens from every ethnic group to use their own language and script in legal proceedings.

Article 49. The offices in the autonomous ethnic regions should educate and encourage all the cadres should learn the local ethnic languages and scripts. Han Chinese cadres should learn the local ethnic languages and scripts. Cadres from minority ethnic groups, while learning their own ethnic languages and scripts, should at the same time, learn Putonghua and Standardized Chinese characters propagated throughout the country. National workers in autonomous ethnic areas who can use more than two of the local languages and scripts well should be encouraged with rewards.

Using Chinese as the medium of instruction (MOI) while teaching Chinese in minority primary schools was clearly pointed out in article 37. In article 49, the requirement is for both Chinese and minority officials to be bilingual. This serves for the purpose of developing more efficient and quality communication between the government and the local citizens. It can be seen that because minority languages are as difficult as they are, it will be hard for the Han Chinese cadres to learn them –

especially the scripture – and hence they will not be too interested. But for the minority cadres, if they can use standard Chinese for communication and acquire the skills of using standardized Chinese characters, their future in government work will be brighter and more rewarding. With the emphasis on teaching Chinese using Chinese in minority primary schools, the pressure and reality for minority students to learn the language is inevitable.

In 2002, the “State Council Deepening the Reform Decision to Accelerate the Development of National Education” was released. In 2005, the Ministry of Education issued an article to further strengthen the national work of ethnic minorities in minority areas, which has speeded up economic and social development within these areas. In February 2007, the State Council passed the “Minority Issues 'Eleventh Five-year Plan’”. In this plan, the State Council clearly addressed as their focal point the preparing and training of high quality bilingual teachers for local education. In late 2006, the state authorities introduced a number of policies and measures that were intended to create a sense of purpose and common goal in minority bilingual education. In October 2006, the Ministry of Education issued the “Full- time Minority National Schools Chinese Curriculum Standards (Trial)”. During 2006-2007, there had been a significant amount of development in bilingual education in minority areas, which contributed to promoting multi-cultural diversity and building a harmonious society. The document was applicable to the group who had used a minority language as the main medium of instruction, and who had used Putonghua later as a partial medium of instruction. The same articles are used to evaluate minority text teaching materials as well as examining minority education teaching results.

Fiscal aid has also increased in order to develop minority education. In November 2006, the Ministries of Finance and Education issued a joint article, which clearly stated that special funds would be given to teachers who were working in the western and central minority regions in China. Thus China was officially, for the first time since 1949, funding specialized teacher training for bilingual education for the minorities. In November 2007, the CPC Central Committee Propaganda Department,

the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Ministry of Finance, State Administration of Taxation, and the General Administration of Press and Publication, all jointly issued the “Opinions on Further Enhancing Efforts to Support Minority Language Publishing Notice”. This notice requested all central and local governments to increase the subsidies on minority language publishing, since during that period the number of minority-published books had increased. As an example, in IMAR the number of books published increased from 8.11 million in 2006 to 9.34 million in 2007. Throughout 2006 to 2007, the state continued to increase investment in minority ethnic areas. As a result of these policies, there has been an improvement not only in basic educational conditions, but there has also been a promotion of bilingual education.

IMAR, with its special language environment, political characteristics, and demographic structure, stands as an interesting area to study how minority language policies are implemented and how the trilingual education models are formed. It is a challenging test for the government to develop policies that result in producing good trilingual education in the area. Whether policy implementation, the policy adaption process, and the outcomes of the policy implementation is coherent or not is one of the reasons to do this research. The other reasons are, to find out what trilingual education models are taught in the MNPS schools that are chosen in this study, to discuss whether minority language and culture is marginalized or not based on the findings, and to see what factors affect the implementation of trilingual models in IMAR.

The purpose of this study is to connect my findings with theories and previous existing research, in order to show a more holistic view of what trilingual education policies are in IMAR, what are the trilingual models in MNPS in IMAR, and find out new factors that affect trilingual education practice.

Inner Mongolia is placed in the north of China, and borders with Mongolia, with a small portion bordering with Russia. It has 18 trading border gates with the two countries. Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR) has been a historical arena

for many of the ethnic groups of northern China. Mongolian livelihood and nomadic civilization has impacted Chinese history and culture. The Mongolian ethnic minority is one of China's 55 ethnic minority groups, with their own language. The Mongolian population in IMAR is over 44 million. The rest of the Mongolian population is distributed across the *Xinjiang*, *Qinghai*, *Liaoning*, *Jilin*, and *Heilongjiang* provinces in China.

Table 1.2.1

Demographic and Mongolian Language in IMAR (Governmental Statistics in IMAR, 2010)

Mongolian population in IMAR	44,249,900
Population in minorities in China	4 th (after Hui, Uygur, Tibetan, Zhuang)
Mongolian language	Classic Mongolian script in written form which was invented in 1204, dialects diverse in different area



Figure 1.2.1 Map of IMAR

(source:
<https://www.google.com.hk/maps/vt/data>)

The image below shows the traditional writing in IMAR and the Cyrillic form of writing. Spoken Mongolian also has multiple dialects that differ in the different areas of IMAR and Mongolia. Traditional Mongolian is written vertically, from left to right, and it has successfully served as the local language for all Mongolian-speaking individuals for centuries. There is a huge amount of literature that was created in this

language in order to write down fairytales, aphorisms, and comments on translations of philosophical works from the East, and manuals that were issued in datans (Buddhist temples).

Latin	Cyrillic	Alone	Initial	Medial	Final
a	а	ᠠ	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ
e	э	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠤ
i	и	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠤ
o	о	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ
u	у	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ
ö	ө	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ
ü	ү	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ	ᠣ

Figure 1.2.2 Writing forms of Mongolian (source: <http://www.mongols.eu/mongolian-language/traditional-mongolian-script/>)

Other than its rich cultural heritage, the milk, coal mining, farming industries, animal husbandry, and nomadic tourist are all major industries in IMAR. There are more than 210 different kinds of underground mineral resources and large natural resources in the region. Mining has been transforming IMAR's landscape and impacting the lives of traditional nomads since the 1950s. In order to gain financial benefits for the investors, what is left of the landscape looks like the surface of the moon. In 1958, China had built the national defense and aerospace industry center in the *Ejina* Town (a small town located in the northwestern part of IMAR).

1.2.2 Language Policies toward IMAR and Mongolian Ethnic Minority

With the "Regulations on Inner Mongolian Language", the promulgation and implementation of the Mongolian language has been moved onto a positive path. The formulation of these laws and regulations were designed to respect and encourage the development of ethnic groups and retain their right to learn their native languages. These policies embody equality, unity, mutual aid, and harmonious socialist ethnic relations. In reality, as seen above, this is an illusion in the face of the dominant

Chinese language. The Chinese government has concluded that, after several years of practical exploration and the theoretical summary of the work of our national languages, that the overall situations of the national language policies are implemented properly, and that the national policy in the construction of the legal system is the best way forward. However, attention should still be brought to those regions where minority nationalities are still being neglected and minority languages and bilingual education is relatively poor. As much as they respect the entire nation, China's minority nationalities also have great respect and deep feelings for their own languages.

Students in MNPS are taught to be trilingual. Chinese national policies have made both Chinese and Mongolian compulsory subjects to learn in these schools. Students here receive education with Mongolian as the main medium of instruction (MOI). They also only measure the outcomes through exam results, and hence are severely responsible for the depleting situation of some minority languages. Although the most used language in IMAR is Chinese, and Mongolian is relatively less used in the area, one should not sacrifice the self-esteem and identity of minority students while they receive additive trilingual education. Understandably, also, English is the least used language in IMAR.

1.3 Personal Motivation and Suitability

I have received trilingual education for 12 years of my life, and my first language is Mongolian. However, despite my personal interest vested in this project, I have tried to be as objective as possible in my analysis.

The Mongolian culture and literature I have been exposed to became my foundation to do this study. The experience of the separation of language input and output outside of IMAR at the Southwest Normal University in Chongqing gave me 4 years of experience to live and study with other minorities from southwest China, as well as Han students. In 2007, I was employed by the government to work on a project called

the ‘Inland Uyghur Boarding School Project’ in Shenzhen. During that project, I saw how Uyghur minority students have changed their lives by tenacity, prevision, and dedication, and how they are benefiting from minority policies.

How to construct the current model? How to develop a more scientific curriculum in order to develop Mongol students’ competence in three languages, in order to help them merge into mainstream society, have a better life, and at the same time be confident and be proud of being Mongolian? These issues are what policy makers, educators, and intellectuals are facing nowadays. Hence, my motivation to do this study is to open the doors of IMAR, and invite those who are interested in this area to see what is happening in this battleground.

1.4 Ethno-linguistic Environment in IMAR

A minority region is usually a battleground for political power, social mobility, social justice, and human rights, as well as a perfect backdrop to study language policy. Schools, especially primary schools, are at the eye of this storm. By sacrificing a precious language, and the culture that the language has been carrying along with it, in order to win in this battle is a sacrifice that ethnic minorities, or even the whole country, cannot afford to pay.

Ethno-linguistic vitality is how language is used in a community. To understand what trilingual model is implemented in the region, we must first look at the ethno-linguistic environment of the community. Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) stated that ‘ethno-linguistic vitality’ is what makes a group behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in an intergroup situation. Mongolian and Chinese are the two official languages in IMAR. In 2001, the Ministry of Education in Beijing stipulated that English provision should start from Primary 3 throughout the country by the autumn of 2002 (Ministry of Education 2001a).

As an ethnic Mongolian autonomous region, Mongolian and Chinese are used here more widely than English. With urbanization and economic development making its

way through China, more business and job opportunities are now related to Chinese than Mongolian and English. The need to speak and use Chinese is significantly higher than the other two languages, even though this is a Mongolian community. English is now taught from grade 3 in some schools grade 2, even in the most remote MNPSs. But the sustainability and usage of the language is very weak.

1.5 Anticipated Outcomes

All the data from interviews, lesson observations, and community observations will be conducted in the 3 target MNPS in IMAR as the first outcome. Reports and discussions based on three MNPS case studies will be the main data resource for my doctorate degree dissertation. This study will identify the role and status of Mongolian, Chinese, and English in the language model in IMAR, evaluate the different models in sustaining the Mongolian language, and identify sustaining factors that are fostering language achievement in the language model. This study will be a revelation of what the additive trilingual education models are in IMAR. I may find that the models found in IMAR are different to the 4 models that have been previously tested, or I may add new models onto the four models. The main purpose of this study is to offer readers information about trilingual language implementation in IMAR.

By the end of this study, I will identify the trilingual models of the sample schools, and find out factors that are impacting the implementation of trilingual models and its sustainability. At the same time, I will identify the factors at different levels – tertiary, secondary, and primary – and how these factors interact and influence each other in forming different models. I will also have a linear comparison of trilingual education schools at different demographic and political levels, in order to find more characteristics of different models, and what these schools have in common and what are their differences.

It is expected that the research project will be published in a few journals and have an

impact on policy-making with regards to protecting endangered languages, ethno-linguistic vitality, minority language education policy transfer in China, and social equity for minority groups in China. It will also shed light on the global phenomenon of bi/tri/multilingualism and bi/tri/multilingual education.

1.6 Anticipated Challenges

Since IMAR is a politically sensitive area, this study will meet political challenges at all levels. Most of them are confined to the bureaucratic ways of doing business. Without establishing a connection, without using the *guanxi* (network) in IMAR, things cannot be done. There will be difficulties to get access to some key political documents on minority policies, and it will also be a challenge to travel in order to collect data, as the area is very vast. On the other hand, analyzing conducted data from the interviews, questionnaires, and lesson observations is also an enormous and complex task. The aim of this paper is to present an objective picture of trilingual models of IMAR to the people who are interested in minority trilingual education and minority policy implementation. It is a window for you to see IMAR trilingual education.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review some of the basic terms that are concerned with bilingual/trilingualism and minority language policies. Further on, it will review previous studies conducted on successful trilingual education in different minority schools in Europe, the USA, and Canada, and compare different minority educational models and trilingual policies since 1949 in China.

It will also examine how trilingual education policies are implemented and adapted on different levels in minority areas in China. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the key terminology as well as review meaning and overall findings from concerning previously conducted key research. An analysis and evaluation of previous bilingual/trilingual education, the policies, and the models, reflect global, national, and local tensions. I will focus on describing and examining the bilingual/trilingual policy implementation and Adamson and Feng's (2013) ethnic minority trilingual education models.

2.2 The Nature of Additive Trilingualism

Many people nowadays are multilingual, rather than bilingual or monolingual. The transitional bilingual model is explained by Linndholm-Leary (2001), and Saunders and Goldenberg (1999) as transitional bilingual education. Some scholars claim that successful additive trilingual education should produce people whose cognitive, linguistic intelligence and self-esteem is complementarily well-developed in a monolingual society, which allows use of a minority language at an initial stage from the classroom to gradually move to the use of the mainstream language.

One early and highly detailed classification of bilingual education was by Mackey in 1970. Some scholars have divided bilingual education into two major streams: transitional bilingual education and maintenance bilingual education. The former system aims to shift the child from the use of the minority language, to use the dominant majority language, with social and cultural assimilation into the majority language as the underlying aim. On the other hand, maintenance bilingual education aims to foster the minority language in the child, strengthening the child's sense of cultural identity, and affirming the rights of an ethnic minority group in a nation (Blake, 2005). The following table summarize some language models in bilingual education:

Table 2.2

Strong forms of bilingual education for bilingualism and biliteracy

Type of Program	Typical Type of Child	Language of the Classroom	Societal and Educational Aim	Aim in Language Outcome
IMMERSION	Language Minority	Bilingual with initial emphasis on L2	Pluralism and Enrichment. Additive	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
MAINTENANCE/HERITAGE LANGUAGE	Language Minority	Bilingual with emphasis on L1	Maintenance, Pluralism, and Enrichment. Additive	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
TWO WAY/DUAL LANGUAGE	Mixed Language Minority & Majority	Minority and Majority	Maintenance, Pluralism, and Enrichment. Additive	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
MAINSTREAM BILINGUAL	Language Majority	Two majority Languages Pluralism	Maintenance & Biliteracy, and Enrichment. Additive	Bilingualism

Note: (1) L2=Second Language; L1=First Language, FL=Foreign Language, (2)

These tables above are based on discussion with Ofelia who extends this to 14 types

in Garcia (1997, p.410)

Additive Trilingualism is acquiring a third language without interfering with the learner's first language while acquiring the ability of habitually using all three languages fluently. Learning an additional language is easier for those who already know a second language than it is for monolinguals. It has been proven through earlier studies that a positive transfer occurs from the second language learning to learning an additional, third language. Trilinguals are not only advantaged in learning additional languages but studies have also reported that the use of minority languages as the language of instruction leads to beneficial effects. Whether or not multilingual education is deemed successful or not may depend to a large extent on the definition or goals of the kind of trilingualism that is fostering it.

Benefits of additive bilingualism, in turn, facilitate the acquisition of additional languages. Additive bilingualism tends to occur in situations where the first language is important and acquisition of a second language does not cost the first language. Otheguy and Otto (1980) divided maintenance bilingual education into static maintenance and developmental maintenance. The former aims to maintain language skills at the level of a child entering school, while the latter seeks to develop students' home language skills in order to achieve full proficiency and full biliteracy. The following tables are Mackey's strong and weak forms of bilingual education for bilingualism and biliteracy (Blake, 2005, p.215-216):

2.3 Bilingual/Additive Trilingual Education Policy and Implementation in China

Language itself is not political, and is not simply a medium of communication, but it also reflects power relations (Glasra & Schedler, 2004). Especially in areas like IMAR, *Xinjiang* Uygur Autonomous region, Tibetan Autonomous Region – or any other minority autonomous region in China – there are battles of political power and economic consequences. Laws on the use and development of the ethnic minority

language affects trilingual education and the language itself in IMAR, as these laws and articles dictate how trilingual education in IMAR should develop. During the Cultural Revolution, much of the minority population was forced to quit learning their local language and learn Putonghua instead. Hence, many ethnic minorities became bilinguals. After the 1980s, ethnic minorities were given the freedom to study their own language, but they also had to learn Chinese from primary school.

The Chinese Government started to strongly encourage bilingual education post 1991; the effect was to encourage the use of the ethnic minority language within autonomous areas, while at the same time add Chinese into their daily learning and daily use. With the blossoming of the bilingual education phenomenon in China – along with China entering the WTO, fast economic development, and the success of 2008 Olympic Games – English has become increasingly popular in China. Ethnic minorities need to enter mainstream society to deepen their understanding of China, and the world outside of China, while a major part of Chinese society also needs to further study and develop minority areas. Needs within the nation between minorities and the majority of society, as well as force from the western world, has fostered bilingualism and changed it into the trilingualism phenomenon.

Chinese was first required to appear in the curriculum in primary 3. But in many minority areas, the time has been moved to primary 2 or even primary 1. English was first introduced in primary 6, and now moved to primary 3 or even primary 2 in some minority areas. Various types of trilingual education models are found in minority areas in China. Destiny of minority languages varies among those with their own scripts and those do not have their own scripts; minority language status varies among those with different ethno-linguistic environment, different geographical locations, and different social economic status.

There are many studies on transitional bilingual education policies in China. One most recent study done by Adamson and Feng compared the implementation of policies in three minority groups in China; respectively the *Zhuang*, *Uygur*, and *Yi* minority. In their study, they evaluated the implementation of language policies in

these areas, and identified some of the facilitators and barriers that affected the success levels of additive trilingual education (Adamson & Feng, 2009). They proposed that ethnic minority languages are at a disadvantaged situation compared to the Chinese and English language in China. In another study, Feng gave us a full picture by evaluating two conceptions of bilingualism, with a focus on concept for the majority, and the impact of the contemporary English and Chinese bilingual campaign on minority students (Feng, 2005).

2.4 Four Models of Trilingual Education in China

Adamson and Feng (2013) identified 4 models (shown in table 3.6.1 below) that are implemented in minority areas in China, through which they have discovered that ecological elements, such as geographical, linguistic, pedagogical, historical, economic, and political factors, can all impact school models in minority areas. They have also identified the common and diverse features of language policies promoting additive trilingualism at the planned (policymaking) and implemented (classroom) stages in different regions of the PRC.

The findings of this study are consistent with Dong Fang's four identified models in IMAR (Dong, 2009). They find out that stable economic growth, demographic diversity, political commitment, and minority teacher resources are common factors that affect what kind of model is implemented in a certain area. There are also factors, such as politically sensitive issues; in some minority areas that can also influence what type of model can be implemented in the area.

The first model is strongly focused on nurturing minority students' minority language skills/ Ethnic language in this community and the school is usually well preserved and the community has strong ethnolinguistic vitality in minority language. Ethnic language is used as the major instruction languages besides the language itself and the other learning subjects for the students.

The second kind of model is a balance between Chinese and the minority language. This balance is not only seen in the distribution of curriculum subjects', but also in the structure of staffing in the school and students' resources.

The third kind of model is either found in place where the assimilation is implemented heavily or the place that lack of minority teachers that can carry on further education in the minority language. So after 3-4 grades, the minority students will switch to learning all the subjects using Chinese as the medium of instruction. In this case, the minority language is slowing completely giving way to Chinese.

Table 2.4

The Four Models in Trilingual Education in minority areas, China (Reframed based on Adamson and Feng, 2013)

Model	Characteristic
<i>Type I</i> Accretive Model	Strong presence of ethnic language in curriculum and as MOI. Chinese introduced at an early stage. English introduced at a later stage. Found in areas where ethnic minority language is robustly supported.
<i>Type II</i> Balanced Model	Two streams: ethnic language and Chinese. Equal time in the curriculum. English introduced later. Found in areas of balanced demographics; serves to encourage social harmony.
<i>Type III</i> Transitional Model	Strong presence of Chinese in curriculum and as Medium of Instruction. Ethnic language plays a lesser role. English introduced at a later stage. Found in areas where ethnic minority language is less robust.
<i>Type IV</i> Depreciative Model	School promoted as trilingual but only offers Chinese (as Medium of Instruction) and English. No ethnic language even outside the classroom. Found in areas of linguistic and cultural assimilation.

The fourth model is found in areas where the minority language's ethnolinguistic

vitality is almost replaced by Chinese. They claim to be minority schools but do not use the minority language as a learning subject nor as the medium of instruction.

What kind of model is implemented and how it is implemented is very tied with the political, geographical, interaction with other regions or nations, and economical issues. The previous research shows that the first model, which is protecting the minority language and has a rich ethno-linguistic vitality, is rarely found in China.

Feng and Sunuodula proposed an analytical framework that compared the recent literature review on bilingual and additive trilingual implementation (Feng & Sunuodula, 2009). Their findings can be used as feedback to the policymaking and implementation cycle, so as to help scholars in evaluating how policy outcomes and policy-making is connected with each other.

2.5 Four Models of Trilingual Education in IMAR

The three languages in trilingual education in IMAR are Mongolian, Chinese, and English. Other than these three languages that are targeted as the main evaluative factor in this study, there are also other factors that I need to take into consideration. Previous studies have found that trilingual education is related to factors such as socioeconomic status, national policy, demographic diversity, minority teacher resources, and politically sensitive issues (Adamson, 1998). There are a number of studies carried out in IMAR that study additive trilingual education models; experimental research on Mongolian students learning English (Bao & Jin 2010; Bai & Li, 2006), on strategies for teaching Mongolian students English starting at college level (An & Zhou H, 2009), and on the quality of teachers in primary or middle schools (Zhou S, 2003; Lu, 2010). In a valuable case study (Zhao, 2010) on 12 Mongolian graduates of the Mongolian Experimental School – where students receive additive trilingual education from primary to high school – the author concluded, “Additive trilingual Mongol students face fewer obstacles than those from Mongolian-Chinese bilingual streams. Learning an international language is to be

able to balance their accumulation of human capital in interethnic competition and endow minority students with power in social relations”.

There are a number of studies that have been carried out in IMAR to study additive trilingual education models, or experimental research on Mongolian students learning of English (Bao & Jin 2010; Bai & Li, 2006), on strategies for teaching Mongolian students English starting at college level (An & Zhou, 2009), and on the quality of teachers in primary or middle schools (S. Z. Zhou, 2003; Lu, 2010).

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Adamson and Feng’s minority language education models in China (shown in table 2.4 above) are based and developed on four trilingual education models Dong found in IMAR (Dong, 2009). My main contribution to the literature based on this study will be, first, to identify more factors that are affecting trilingual education policy implementation and the trilingual education model. These factors are ethno-linguistic vitality, international forces (especially Mongolia and English from the effect of globalization), and students and teachers’ attitudes and beliefs on trilingual education in IMAR. Secondly, to identify how each factor works together with one other and produces different models in IMAR.

There are not many studies currently on IMAR trilingual models. This study will be an in-depth comprehensive study that covers primary schools from different demographic levels, with different levels of ethno-linguistic vitality and demographic characteristics in IMAR.

There are different methods used in previous studies on trilingual education and policy implementation in IMAR. For example, the study done by Dong and Narisu in IMAR is more focused on using the qualitative study method. They carried out semi-structured interviews, field observation, and open-ended question-interviews with the students. The number of students and teachers that are involved in their study covers almost all the areas in IMAR. But my study is mainly focused on three schools that are carefully chosen, and the research methods are a combination of mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative study.

2.6 Key Factors in Language Environment

There are many factors involved in a language environment. A key issue in a language environment is whether the minority language is dominant (superordinate) or is subordinate (Baker, 2005). Giles *et al.* (1977, Giles, 2001) suggested a three-category model: status factors, demographic factors, and institutional support factors. Status factors include the economic status of a minority language and the symbolic status of a language.

Blake concluded, “When a minority language is seen as giving higher social status and more political power, a shift towards the majority language may occur. When a minority language is seems to co-exist with unemployment, financial poverty, social deprivation and few amenities, the social status of the language may be negatively affected” (Blake, 2005, p. 56).

The status factors with the popularization of majority languages, such as English and Chinese, alongside with internationalization and globalization, will foster and stimulate the minority population to go back to the roots of their culture and language. Factors that are involved in a language environment also include demographic factors. Demographic factors cover elements such as geographical distribution of a language, the number of speakers of a certain language, and their

saturation within a particular area (Evas, 2000).

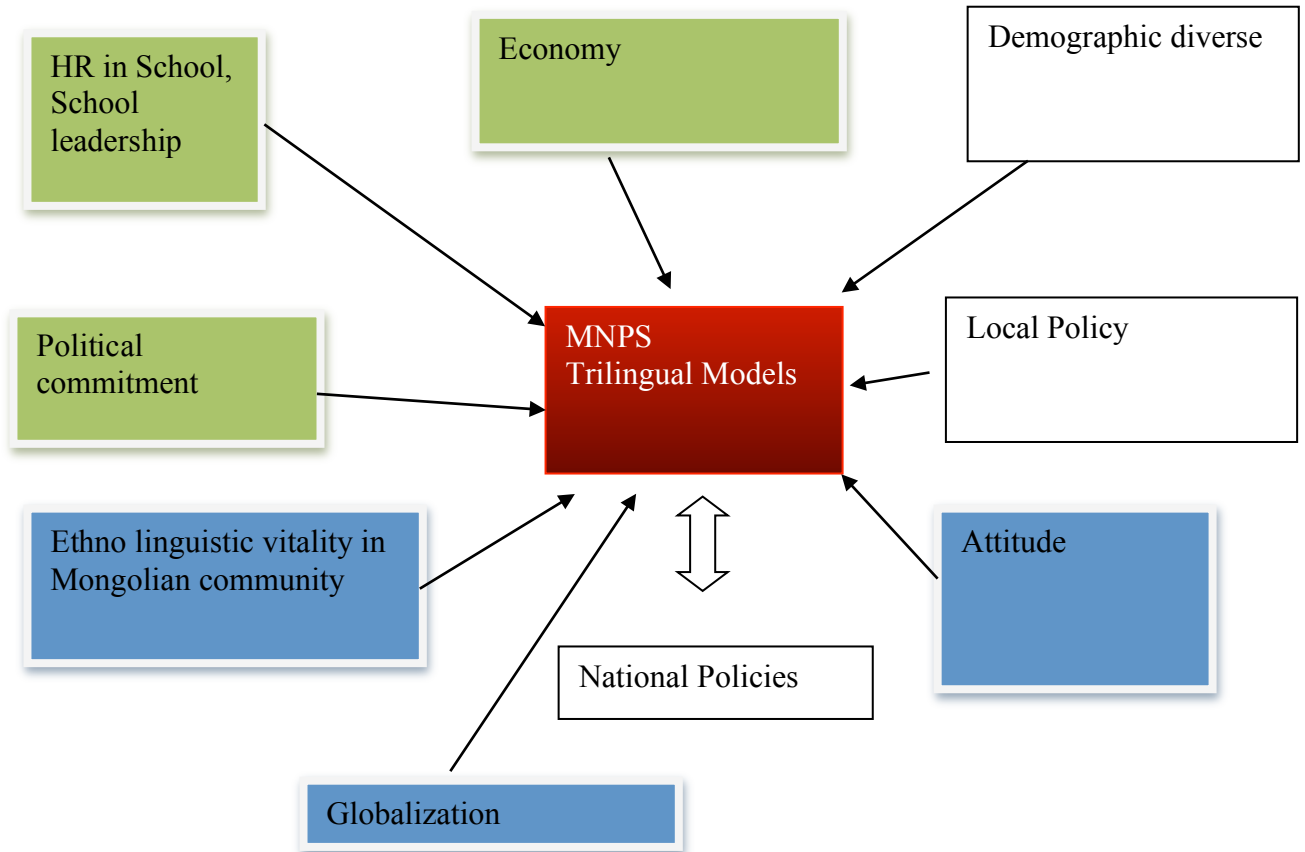


Figure 2.6.1 Factors underneath trilingual education (Adapted from Adamson, 1998)

Key:

- Factors identified in previous studies
- Factors that are focused in this study
- Factors identified in latest studies

Institutional support factors include mass media that uses the minority language. Mass media includes television, radio, newspapers, magazine, the Internet, and computer software. Strong representation in mass media gives the minority language both a high status and the feeling of being modern (Blaker, 2005, p. 57). Other than this factor, religion and administrative services in the minority language also provide

the language with status in society, while schooling serves as an essential factor in order to reflect how the government uses local policy to maintain and sustain a minority language. If a minority language is used in an educational institution, the chances of maintaining this language and its culture are much higher. If the minority language does not even exist in a school curriculum, and is not widely used in the schools among the youth, then its chances of survival severely decrease.

All the factors mentioned above indicate that bilingualism, bilingual education, the ethno-linguistic environment, and trilingual education are not simply ideological phenomena, but rather they show that minority and multilingual education is complicated, conflicting, and is comprised of varying philosophies.

Figure 2.6.1 shows that current studies so far have already identified several factors that are influencing what kind of model is implemented in minority areas (white and green figures). The blue and green ones are what I have found (in my pilot studies) that are gaps in the literature and areas that need to be explored in this study. In the course of my research, it is possible that further factors will emerge. In the context of studying factors that impact how each model is implemented, it is a very comprehensive situation. So the classification and identification of factors are not absolute but rather inclusive and flexible. This study is open to add more factors into the findings.

Adamson and Feng's (2013) minority language education models in China were developed from four trilingual education models that Dong found in IMAR (Dong, 2009). The models show that student's native language skills can be maintained at a higher level and further developed, and that there can be, at the same time, proper learning of Mandarin and English (Ramirez et al., 1991).

2.7 Conclusion

Through this review, I have explored some key concepts, and theories that will be the

backbone of my study. This review provides me solid theoretical lens to study and analyze my research of models implemented in the three case schools, as well as help me on confirming and adding new findings to existing models. The purpose of my study is to examine what model is carried out in each target school, and how those factors in Figure 2.6.1 come together to influence the forming of each model in case schools. Meanwhile I will describe the trilingual implementation phenomenon in the implementation of policy and the adaption process till its outcomes and sustainability. Then I will summarize how are the factors impacting trilingual models using the tertiary, secondary, and primary levels of policy implementation to identify factors at primary, secondary, or tertiary levels that effecting trilingual education policy and its implementation.

For implication and further study, scholars investigate a relatively systematic model that includes all the models and factors that I mentioned in this review for improvement of trilingual education study. All the reviews that I have included in this literature review, except for one study, are done through a qualitative study. My own study will be using mixture of qualitative and quantitative study methods to collect and analyze data to draw findings.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the research instruments were designed, justifies the adopted research methodologies, provides detailed explanation for all the data collecting and analyzing procedures, discusses the analytical techniques and the measures taken to ensure the reliability of the data and findings, and compares different models that are found in this study. In this chapter, I will discuss my rationale for using the selected qualitative and quantitative methods, and how I handled the data. In the first section, I will define some of the key terms used in this study, moving on to describe the various types of analysis conducted, and show the coherence and coordination between the different parts of the thesis.

This research is a mix of an exploratory, explanatory, and evaluative study. The focus of the study is to describe what trilingual education models are implemented in IMAR, how they are implemented, and to identify factors that are impacting the implementation of models in MNPS in IMAR. I take a closer look to understand teachers', students', parents', government officials' perceptions, their attitudes toward trilingual language policy, and their experience with trilingual education in IMAR, as well as observe and describe the language environment of the community and schools, and explain the trilingual education situation in IMAR.

All the research questions are formulated based on reviewing current literature and the naturalistic trilingual education context of IMAR.

The objective of this study is to answer the following three research questions:

- 1) What are the additive trilingual education models in MNPS in IMAR?
- 2) How is additive trilingualism achieved in the case schools?
- 3) What are the factors that impact these models in the case schools?

Currently there are many scholars studying transitional bilingual education in minority areas in China. There are studies about minority education in the *Yunnan* province, the *Bai* minority preschool education and teacher development; there are also studies on the *Zhuang* minority in *Guangxi* province, and the status of trilingual education implementation in *Guangxi Zhuang* minority Autonomous Region. Not only are the studies based in the south and southwest of China, where most of the diverse minorities reside, in northern China, places like *Qinghai*, *Yanbian*, *Xinjiang* Uygur Autonomous Region, and *Gansu* province, the studies on minority language policy and its implementation has been quite successful in terms of studying policy-making, policy implementation, and minority bilingual teachers and students' development.

Adamson and Feng (2009) identified the common and different features of language policies promoting additive trilingualism at the planned (policymaking) and implemented (classroom) levels in different regions of the PRC. There are 4 models (shown in table 2.4 in Chapter 2) that are applied in minority areas in China (Adamson and Feng, 2013).

Many factors such as geography, linguistic, pedagogy, history, economy and policy have impact on school models in minority areas. My contribution would be to identify the major factors that are shaping and impacting the trilingual education policy, and the implementation of different trilingual education models in IMAR. In my study, I will compare different models implemented in different schools, following with a categorization of each factor into different levels, and describe how each of the different level of factors contribute to the shaping and implementation of each trilingual model.

3.2 Design of Study

Trilingual education policy and its interpretation, implementation, and sustainability in IMAR are explored in this study. They are also assessed and described by the designed tools to ascertain geographical, linguistic, pedagogical, historical, economic, and political factors that are affecting them. Three sets of questionnaires, three sets of interviews, and two major theory frames are adapted in this study in order to provide a more comprehensive a holistic picture of trilingual teaching model status in IMAR.

The following is an introduction to the methodologies:

I used a group of tested methodologies to describe, explore, and explain this social phenomenon. The research tools include policy document analysis, an analysis of the community profile, school-based field studies, and interviews and questionnaires with teachers, stakeholders, policy makers, and parents (Adamson & Feng, 2013). The nature of this explorative study is essentially that of a social scientific research. It is mainly pursued to explore or describe the language policies and its implementation in IMAR, and it evaluates outcomes of language policy implementation of trilingual education in IMAR. This study incorporates three levels of education levels:

- i. Primary level
- ii. Secondary level
- iii. Tertiary level

Four stages of policy analysis:

- i. Description of policy,
- ii. Interpretation of policy,
- iii. Outcomes of policy implementation (for simultaneous study of 3 schools), and
- iv. Sustainability of policy.

Understanding and interpreting the extent and nature of trilingual education involves

an analysis of policy documents and the mindset behind those policies at tertiary level. This study also attempts to evaluate the actual teaching of Mongolian, Chinese, and English by language teachers, the actual policy implementation in schools, what language policy implementing in IMAR produces, and its sustainability. I will also evaluate to what extent this trilingual language policy implementation is fostering Mongolian culture as well as sustaining the Mongolian language.

3.3 Instruments

Altogether there are 2 sets of students' and 1 set of teacher questionnaires. Besides these, different forms for interviews of teachers and stakeholders, and observation sheets are included in Appendix. One set of questionnaire is tested in the previous project on language policy and its implementation, while another set of the student questionnaire is adopted from a project conducted in Hong Kong to understand Hong Kong students' perceptions of biliteracy and trilingual education policy implementation in a primary school. Since that questionnaire was originally designed for students in Hong Kong, I have made certain changes according to the cultural context of IMAR.

The survey was administered to a target group of students from primary 4-5 in each MPNS sample school. The survey and questions were set to each individual to understand their language ability, language background and expectations of trilingual education outcomes, experience in trilingual education implementation, and their attitude towards language policies in IMAR.

Another set of questionnaires combined with interview-style open-ended questions was sent to teachers. The first part is aiming to understand the teacher's experience, their language background, and the second part is detailed questions about their views, and their experience in language policies and its implementation. The following methodologies will be used to find answers to the research questions in the three schools:

Table 3.3

Research Question and Research methods

Research Question	Methodologies
RQ1, What are the additive trilingual education models in MNPS in IMAR?	<p>Documents review: national policy, school policy/supports</p> <p>semi-structure interview: School conditions impinging on teachers' actions, human resources</p>
RQ2, How is additive trilingualism achieved in each case school?	<p>Semi-structured Interview: teaching time, materials, students resources, teaching content, public exams outcomes (L1, L2, L3)</p> <p>Lesson observations: Teachers' actions (e.g., lesson plans, classroom decisions regarding the focus and teaching and learning, design and use of resources)</p> <p>Questionnaires for teachers and students: perceptions of school conditions, national policy, trilingual education models,</p>
RQ3, What are the factors that impact these models in the case schools?	<p>Documentary review, Non-Participation Observation, Semi-structured interview: officials, principals, head teachers, community leaders, administrators, parents</p>

The instrument student questionnaire 1 which can be found in Appendix is divided into 3 parts:

Section 1 is item 1-3

Section 2 is item 4-15

Section 3 is item 16-20

In order to make the data comparable within a region and between the regions, the schools are sampled in terms of their demographic, geographic, and socio-economic typology; the schools are chosen as representatives of demography, resources, and geography. One school is situated in a relatively poor and remote area (minority village school), another school is located in a town or town area, and one MNPS is in Hohhot city. The following schools are selected and numbered in the format of “initials of the regions + number”:



Figure 3.3 Location of Case Schools

City school: Hohhot Experimental MNPS, with 1624 students, and 104 members of staff.

Town school: *Damaoqi* MNPS, with 900 students, and 115 members of staff.

Village school: *Huanghuatala* MNPS, with 778 students, and 32 members of staff.

A typical study of a school would include:

- a) A focus group interview with 3 community leaders
- b) 1-3 interview with regional and local educational officials
- c) 1-3 interviews with the school principal, deputy and other school leaders

- d) 1-3 interviews with language teachers
- e) 1 focus group interview with 10 students
- f) 1 focus group interview with 10 parents
- g) 15 questionnaire for teachers
- h) 120 questionnaire for students
- i) 10 lesson observation
- j) Field notes, (e.g., observation of school buildings, and wall decorations, language use in the school outside of the classroom and language use in community)

Questionnaire. The questionnaires that I use are adapted from a previous project to study minority education policies and models in China. Multiple choices and the Likert scale are used to gather data, basic information, language learning/teaching, and trilingual education model perceptions and language attitudes of the stakeholders. 2 versions of questionnaires have been designed, for the students and teachers of MNPS; based on different models of trilingual education, the Chinese questionnaire is translated by me into the Mongolian language for students of the first model. All the questionnaires are verified in previous studies.

Semi-structured interviewing. Adamson and Morris's (1997) framework for curriculum policy evaluation looks at curriculum policy as a complex negotiation of multiple political, socio-economic, and educational factors, that are operating at macro-, meso-, and micro-level (from national policy-making, through institutional adaption, to classroom implementation) (Morris & Adamson, 2010). For the purpose of this study, different types of informants are needed. At the prefecture level, officials, administrators, and researchers are the informants for language policy and language attitude. At the school level, school principals, teachers, students, and parents are a major source of information for language learning experiences, language teaching experiences, and, to some extent, the attitude of parents, students, and stakeholders towards Mongolian, English, and Chinese. Note taking during the interview and note-making after the interview based on the tape-recording are two ways of conducting interviews. All the recordings were done after asking for permission from the interviewees.

Non-participation observation. Observational data includes language provision in classroom practice, and the language used in school and social contexts, such as the community. Thus information is collected around how policies are implemented into additive trilingual education. Lesson observations are recorded and transcripts are made for the purpose of doing this study.

Exploring ethno-linguistic environment. This method is used to test the following things: whether there are activities, an atmosphere, support, and funds that encourage that foster Mongolian minority students to understand and appreciate their own Mongolian culture or not. A community's ethno-linguistic environment means what languages are used in that community.

Documentary review. The documents, published and unpublished, reviewed for this study comprise of a broad range of materials: socio-economic communiqués, written policies, scholarly reports, textbooks, curriculum guidelines, teaching plans, students' achievement reports, school timetables, students' homework, examination papers, etc. However, certain statistics are not available because there was no official data in some of the sampled schools.

3.4 Conducting Data

This thesis notes a holistic process of data conducting experience. This includes establishing connections, translating data collecting tools, collecting data, and data analysis. The whole study was carried out within 4 trips to IMAR. The key steps include: firstly, translating all the questionnaires and interview questions into Chinese and Mongolian. This is an important step for me to understand the concept of these, and it also serves the purpose of allowing participants to understand the content better. Once the Mongolian and Chinese versions are delivered to participants, the qualitative study can be carried out smoothly. The second important step is to establish trust and a cooperative relationship with the targeted school, teachers, and students. In this step, the fact that I can speak Mongolian has contributed to the data

collecting process.

The focus groups were semi-structured face-to-face interviews with small groups of informants (4 to 5). I also conducted field studies and non-participation observations in the schools and communities. 10 language lessons (25-30 students in each) were recorded and observed in the 3 target schools located in central and eastern IMAR. The purpose of lesson observations is to watch and understand the teaching and learning experience for informants and the learning outcomes. Altogether I spent one week in each school. Because the schools are located in different regions in IMAR, I divided the trips into different phases, and overall it took 4 visits to complete the whole mission. All observed classes were no longer than 40 minutes, and each class was recorded when I was present. The lesson observation notes include: a list of classroom activities, classroom behavior, quotes from teachers and students, and interaction patterns and language. I have studied and analyzed the context of in-field study and other factors that may be associated with these classroom activities.

The main methods used in the study are qualitative, including ethnographic interviews, non-participants observation, and formal and non-formal conversations with teachers, students, stakeholders, and parents; and assisted with quantitative questionnaires given to teachers and students. During this process, I have followed the general principle summarized by methodologist Hammersley's (1998,p. 8-9) important principle in conducting ethnographic interviews or formal conversations – which is the pursuit of naturalism and apprehend the everyday, naturalistic setting of participants (Feng et al., 2009).

Following an in-depth content analysis of the language policies, syllabus, textbooks, and curriculum documents, there were also historical, political, social, and socioeconomic factors that had influenced the study, which demanded on an understanding of history, politics, and social and economic influences in IMAR from the past to present. Instead of making quick judgments based on the data collected from one school, all the data was gathered throughout 4 times of travelling (my travelling schedule is shown in the table 2.4). I had spent over a month comparing

and analyzing the data, and to locate patterns and similarities, and categorize it into different language teaching models as well as trying to look for answers to the research questions.

3.5 Trips

I have visited IMAR four times in order to collect data from three target schools. In this section I will write in detail about each trip. Table 2.4 is an illustration of the travelling schedule and main target of each trip.

Table 3.4

Visits to IMAR – time frame

Time	Work
1st visit in 2012, Oct	Set up connection with schools, get access to political document in Hohhot, carry out 45 students' pilot tests, interview 10 teachers using pilot interviewing questionnaire.
2nd visit in 2012, Dec	Teacher interviews, lesson observation, students' questionnaire in city school
3rd visit in 2013, June	Teacher interviews, lesson observation, students' questionnaire in town school
4th visit in 2014, Feb	Teacher interviews, lesson observation, students' questionnaire in village school

3.5.1 First Trip

Initially, in order to see how well students responded to the research methods, an elementary school in Hohhot was chosen as a pilot testing target. 45 copies of student questionnaires and 10 copies of teacher questionnaires were handed to the school. After collecting the pilot tests, some adjustments were made to the questionnaire. The number of variables was changed from 12 to 19 on students' experience and

perceptions of the trilingual model in their school. The reasons for this change was because certain variables had caused confusion, or were not clear enough for students who were still beginners in their ability to understand Chinese, and this was revealed by the t-test data analysis results. Hence it was necessary to divide each variable clearly instead of comprising one or two variables in one question.

Following this was face-to-face meeting with school dean and principal of different schools to plan time of data collection, and explain the purpose of the study and the data collection procedures. Then I spent the next three days at the IMAR museum and library to read about the policies and the historical background of minority languages education policy implementation in IMAR. By the end of the trip, connections with the schools were set, and I was allowed access to some of the documents. However, the plan to meet and interview policy makers had failed due to bureaucratic issues and scheduling difficulties.

3.5.2 Second Trip

The purpose of the second data collection trip was to carry out face-to-face interviews with teachers, observe the school environment, observe the community's ethno-linguistic vitality, and carry out 120 student questionnaires at a city-level MNPS. I visited Xing An National Experimental School in Hohhot and conducted a total of 120 students' questionnaires, school environment observation, 10 teacher interviews, and 9 lesson observations.

In order to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the information sources, lesson observations and interviews have been recorded, and translated and transcribed into English by me for data analysis. But this information is all confidential unless the interviewee gives the writer permission to use their name, otherwise I will use an anonymous identity.

3.5.3 Third Trip

My third trip was to the town school in Baotou city of IMAR, which was 320km from Hohhot, and without any railway facilities. The school visited is close to the China-Mongolian border, and located in a prairie that contains strong Mongolian culture. 10 teacher interviews and 10 teacher questionnaires were conducted, and 9 lessons were observed. The meeting with teachers was in Mongolian. Following the meeting, the school also allowed me plenty of time to go through the décor, teaching material, and lessons plans. 120 student questionnaires were conducted among students from third to sixth grade. I also had the opportunity to observe the school environment and be a non-participating observer at their school meeting. Overall, this trip was productive.

3.5.4 Fourth Trip

The purpose of the fourth data collection trip was to carry out face-to-face interviews with teachers, observe the school environment, observe the community's ethno-linguistic vitality, and carry out 120 student questionnaires at a village-level MNPS. This target school is located in the southeast of IMAR – a village school 1100km away from Hohhot, and 632km away from Beijing, the capital of China. After clarifying and explaining the purpose of this data collection, the school offered a tremendous amount of hospitality, understanding, and cooperation. Face-to-face interviews were arranged in a small meeting room. The head teachers, dean of the school, the principal, and the subject teachers of all three languages attended a meeting on my research, and expressed their opinions and ideas on the questions.

3.6 Data Analysis

I mainly took a qualitative, ground theory approach in order to collect data, and analyzed masses of ethnographic data collected from class observations and learners,

teachers, officials in IMAR in the 3 target schools.

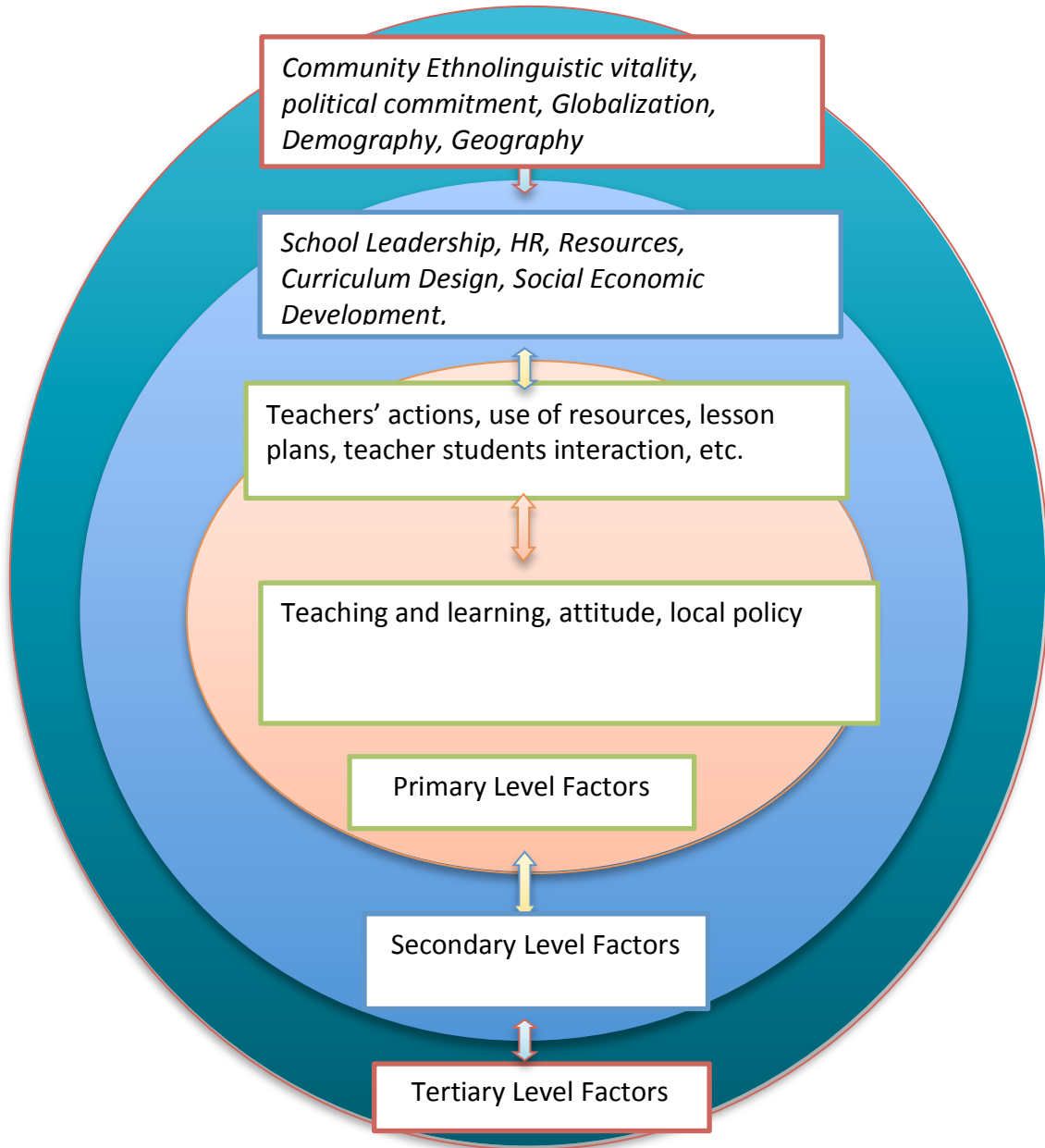


Figure 3.6.1 Categories for analysis of factors and items tested in the school.

(Adapted from Tong & Adamson, 2008)

I divided data collection to two major levels: tertiary level and implementation level (secondary and primary level). Markee (1997) originally illustrated an analytical framework for categorizing factors and items that are tested in a school setting to assess and define issues that impact curricular and teacher innovations at primary and secondary level. Tong and Adamson (2008) developed this frame and used it analyzed primary, secondary, and tertiary level of curriculum implementation

assessment in Hong Kong school. Kennedy (1988) also presented a hierarchy of interrelating subsystems in which innovations have to operate. In his figure, he identified factors that impact the implementation of curricular innovation. All the three frameworks that are mentioned above are only used to assess and define issues and phenomenon in the school context when facing curricular innovation figure.

3.6.1). In this thesis, however, by referring to the three frameworks mentioned above I try to identify where the most important influences are to trilingual educational models in IMAR. I will show that the tertiary level factors are the most important, secondary level is the less influential factors, and primary level factors are the least influential, referring to the analytical framework (figure3.6.1 Three core steps were taken to analyze data:

I. I studied the documents of minority language policies, which were obtained from reading and analyzing the political documents, and interviewing local officials, stakeholders, and school principals.

II. I conducted a content analysis by going through textbooks and syllabi, to understand the situation of how trilingual education policy is implemented in the resourced curriculum area.

III. The data from interviews, questionnaires, and lesson observations were categorized based on different models of classification and statistical data analysis. The resulting performance statistics are fundamental, and agree with the findings and results of interviews.

The problems that I have encountered are the difficulties of obtaining documentary resources; it would be a challenging issue for any researchers. Local protectionism and the bureaucracy in IMAR make it very difficult for any researcher, from abroad or Hong Kong, to get access to key documents. Without a *jieshaoxin* (introduction letter), the educational bureau in IMAR refuses to be interviewed or provide documents. My original plan was to read certain political documents – red-headed documents on minority education policies – at the education bureau of IMAR, but I

was refused by officials. Bureaucracy is a big challenge to overcome. With no *guanxi* (connection), the chances of obtaining access to any documents are slim to none. In reference to the meeting style and hierarchical society of Mainland China, teachers, for example, would usually not speak in front of their dean or any higher authoritative figure. The most sincere conversations actually occur in the corridors after the meetings, or on the dining table. Keeping that in mind, I was always alert, quick to take notes, and ready to record when participants would share valuable opinions and feedback.

Table 3.6.1

Relationship between interview items, analytical frameworks, and RQs

Teacher Interview (TI), Students Questionnaire (SQ)	Area of Focus	Level (T, S, P)	Relevant RQ
TI 3, 4, 5, 6(3), 8, 9 SQ 9	National policy	P	1(1), (2), 2(3), 3(2), (3)
TI 1, 2, 9 SQ 9	Human resources	S, T	1(3), (2)
TI 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 SQ 7 (2-3),	Curriculum design	S, T	3(1), 2(4)
TI 9, 7 SQ 9	Political commitment	P, S	3 (1)
TI 2, 8	Social economic status	S	1(3), 2(1), 3(2)
TI 3, 4(2), 6, 8, SQ2, 3, 4, 9	Demographic diverse	P	1(2), 2(1), 3(3) 2(4),
TI 8, 9	Political issues	P, S	3(3)
TI 8, 9, SQ 9,	Urbanization	S	2(3), 2(4)
TI 3 (2), 4(2) SQ 2, 3, 4, 8,	Ethno linguistic vitality	P	2(1), 2(4)
TI 4 (2), 5(4), 6, 7, 8, 9, S5 (1) SQ 7 (1), 7 (5), 9, 8 (3)	Perception	T, S	2(1), 2(2), 2(3), 3(3)
TI 6(3), 8, 9, SQ 9	Globalization	P, S	1(2), 3(2)

To guarantee naturalism during interviews with teachers and parents has been another challenge. In order to obtain genuine and valuable data while qualitatively collecting data, I communicated with them in Mongolian, and explained clearly my purpose of doing the research. But not all the teachers were available for the questionnaires or

interviews; in any case, this process should be voluntary, keeping in mind the teachers' schedules, and the arrangement of the school.

The biggest challenge of this study has been analyzing data and finding answers to the research questions, referring to three frameworks from Markee, Kennedy, and Tong and Adamson. In order to offer a comprehensive answer to my research questions, I used a table (table 3.6.1) to analyze the students' and teachers' questionnaires, the lessons observations, school observations, as well as the teachers' and students' interview content.

3.7 Conclusion

This research is a mixture of exploratory, explanatory, and evaluative study. The focus of this chapter is to describe what tools were used in data collection process, and the process of interpreting and analyzing data. I have explained, described, and listed in detail the procedures of mixed quantitative and qualitative study methods. These research methods I have mentioned above have helped me to portray, explore, and explain what the trilingual education models in IMAR are, and how policy is interpreted in trilingual education in IMAR. These tools and procedures also identified the different factors that are impacting trilingual educational models. This is also a paper that will show researchers and policy makers who are interested in ethnic minority education language policy implementation in IMAR, and those who are interested in studying or knowing the circumstances. This research is an investigative and explorative study with no hypothesis; although the study was motivated to some extent by the literature, particularly the socio-political forces, socioeconomic factors, ethnolinguistic environment of Mongolian language, the curriculum, and practical issues that Mongolian students are facing nowadays. This paper will not focus on addressing inequality and minority issues, however may touch upon these topics slightly later in the discussion chapter. The methods selected were commanded by two factors: the research questions and ethno-linguistic environment. Hopefully, the findings of this research will verify previous studies or fill the gap in the literature on minority trilingual education in IMAR, China.

Chapter 4

The City School

4.1 Introduction

The following three chapters of my thesis are detailed case studies of schools that have effectively implemented trilingual education policies within their own settings.

In this chapter, I will present my observation and analysis of the trilingual education model implemented in a city school. This school is located in the provincial capital of IMAR – Hohhot – and is known to be one of the best schools in the region that applies the model. I will provide an in-depth analysis of the case school from four dimensions: policy design, policy implementation, teaching outcome, and sustainability.

I will begin each section by contextualizing the location, the background of the school, and the levels of ethno-linguistic vitality in the community. I will then move on to a description of the policy, and a summary of how the model is applied in the school at macro-level. Following this will be a meso-level observation and analysis of the school: their educational philosophies, the school curriculum, classroom pedagogy, learning outcomes, and students and teachers' perspectives and overall attitude towards minority education policy and implementation.

Each of the three chapters will discuss the key features of the school to explain how they fit the trilingual models – for this school it is Model 2 of the four models identified by Adamson and Feng. I will also comment on the characteristics of the school that deem it a Model 2 school, as well as the challenges encountered while implementing trilingual education policies. Finally, each chapter will conclude with certain examples and methods that can be learnt from the respective schools in terms of sustaining the Mongolian language.

4.2 Hohhot City Context

In this section, I will contextualize Hohhot referring to its demographics, economy, and ethno-linguistic vitality. The contextualization of an area is vital in a study of this kind, as, in this case, these factors have a major impact on the implementation of trilingual education.

Hohhot serves as the region's administrative, economic, and cultural center. The total city, counting the counties under its jurisdiction, has a population of over 2.86 million. Located in the south central of Inner Mongolia, at the junction of *Daqingshan* Mountain and *Hetao* Plateau, the city has four districts, four counties, and one banner (town).

Economically, Hohhot is an important industrial city in China with rich underground resources. International trade with western countries encourages the use of English – not as much as Mongolian and Chinese, but the need does exist to a certain extent. Demographically, Mongolian does not have an advantage in this area, due to a rising Han majority (as shown in the table below). However, geographically, its location between China and Mongolia provides a relatively good platform to use Mongolian. Whether the Mongolian language benefits from the local industry or not will be discussed further in this chapter. The combination of advantages and disadvantages in this area is what has encouraged me to investigate how the Mongolian language has sustained here. The case school is placed in the *Sai Han* Governmental District.

4.2.1 Demographics

A multi-ethnic city, Hohhot has a total population of 2,866,615 according to the 2012 Census (Statistics and Census Service, 2012). There are three main ethnic minority groups in Hohhot whose population exceeds a thousand: the Mongolian, Hui, and Manchu minorities. The table below outlines how the population is divided.

Table 4.2.1

Ethnic groups in Hohhot, 2012 census.

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
Han Chinese	2,498,647	87.16%
Mongol	285,969	9.98%
The others (Hui Chinese, Manchu, Korean)	81,999	2.86%

Although Hohhot is the largest city in IMAR, the Mongolian population stands at less than 10%. As the table indicates, the city is strongly Han-dominated, and consequently Mongolian and English are not so favorable in comparison with Chinese in society. Chinese still remains the dominant language in the government, and in cultural, business, and educational interaction. A survey reveals that only 8% of Mongolians in Hohhot can speak the Mongolian language. Subsequently, the unfavorable demographics of the city have a strong impact on the sustainability of the language; the Chinese-dominated environment stands as a barrier against the implementation of trilingual education.

4.2.2 Economy

Hohhot is one of the oldest industrial cities in China. To a certain extent Mongolian and English is fostered amongst international economic bodies – between China/ the IMAR region and other countries. The industry and trade between many different countries with China have cultivated the use of English, while the use of Mongolian has been encouraged when the region interacts with closely bordered Mongolia – another country rich with minerals and underground resources. Through commercial interaction between China and Mongolia, the use of the Mongolian Cyrillic script and Chinese has been maintained. English is firmly restricted within the context of international business or trade. Within the city, Chinese is the most widely used language by the Han, Mongolian, Hui, and Korean, and is also the most useful language in terms of trading within China. We can see that the overall demographic

features of the city have a huge impact on the survival of Mongolian.

Due to a rapid growth of the local milk industry in the city, it is also now referred to as the ‘milk capital’. The largest two milk companies of China, *Yili* and *Mengniu*, both have their industrial base in Hohhot. Recently, the travel and service business has also developed due to the nomadic element of attraction in the region, as well as the Sino-Mongolian trade. There are nine tertiary education institutes in Hohhot, and the medium of instruction is Chinese (except for those who major in Mongolian).

4.2.3 Ethno-linguistic Environment

The ethno-linguistic environment shows how languages are used within a community. All three case studies will look at the ethno-linguistic environment of the community the school is situated in, in order to deduce whether this aids or hinders the overall sustainability of the Mongolian language in that particular area.

I will first look at Hohhot’s, namely the provincial capital’s, level of ethno-linguistic environment. I have conducted 2 field trips to Hohhot to carry out non-participating observations, community observations, and conduct interviews with teachers and parents. The observation sheet can be found in the Appendix.

a) Instrumental Function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

The instrumental function of English language was defined by Kachru (1983, p. 42) as ‘English as a medium of learning at various stages in the educational system of the country’. Accordingly, the instrumental function of the Mongolian, Chinese, and English languages in IMAR can be defined as Mongolian, Chinese, and English as medium of learning at various stages in the educational system of IMAR.

Mongolian is promoted as the main communicative language amongst Mongolians in the Mongolian community schools, as well as being the medium of instruction.

Referring to Chapter 2, in 1952, the first Constitution of the Republic publicized that the ‘minority group has the freedom to use and develop its own language and script’ (He, 1998, pp. 70-71). In the same year, the State Council issued the ‘Guidelines for Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the People’s Republic of China’. In this guideline, it was decided for ‘all the autonomous governments to adopt the languages of all minority nationalities within their jurisdiction for the development of these minorities’ (Zhou, M., 2003, p. 44). There are 38 Mongolian kindergarten and middle schools in Hohhot. Altogether there are 44,000 students; among them 15,000 are minority students, accounting for 34% of the school students’ numbers. 6 schools (kindergarten) among them use Mongolian as medium of instruction. Overall, 4,688 Mongolian ethnic students are taught using Mongolian as medium of instruction in schools (kindergarten). There are 23 schools that teach Mongolian as a subject, and 8,677 students who are learning Mongolian as a subject.

Table 4.2.3

Distribution of Minority schools and Mongolian as MOI schools and students’ numbers

Minority schools (Kindergarten)	Teach Mongolian as a subject school	Total students	minority students(Mongolian, Hui, Korean, Darhan, Manchu)	Mongolian as MOI students	Learn Mongolian as subject students
38	23	44,000	15,000	4,688	8,677

Note:

Minority schools (Kidergarten)—Minority primary, middle schools

Mongolian as MOI students: Students who receive education mainly using Mongolian as medium of instruction

Learn Mongolian as subject students: students who receive education mainly using Chinese as medium of instruction, plus learning Mongolian as a subject

Cooperation between teachers and students, the school, parents, stakeholders, and the community, along with the contribution of the government and local media, ensure that Mongolian education maintains a relatively strong status in the area. Mongolian

nationality schools and kindergartens play a major role in organizing annual Mongolian cultural activities. During the preparation for the Mongolian activities; students participate in activities and performances that cover many aspects of Mongolian culture and its elements. Students who have been exposed to extra-curricular ethnic classes have mastered the Mongol dance and traditional Mongolian instruments, and are constantly invited to perform for visiting guests or events that are broadcasted.

In 2001, National People's Congress Article 37, mentioned in Chapter 3.4, declared that:

“The schools (or classes) recruiting mainly minority learners should use textbooks in the minority language and teach in the minority language, if conditions allow for that; according to actual circumstances, in Chinese lessons, starting from lower primary or upper primary, Putonghua and standardized Chinese characters should be taught. Chinese subject should be introduced to formal curriculum in primary grade three in Minority nationality schools.”

Nowadays, the timing to introduce Chinese is moved earlier to primary two. Some schools even start Chinese speaking lessons from grade 1.

Although the city holds Mongolian cultural festivals annually to attract tourism and popularize the Mongolian culture, there is still a clear overpowering influence of Chinese, and globalization. The city visually reflects how both Mongolian and Chinese coexist harmoniously: the street signs are bilingual, during festivals the elements of décor are Mongolian, with the *Ger* (a campsite for the nomads) erected in the city center, while signs and towns are mostly trilingual in Chinese, *Pinyin*, and Mongolian. International enterprises such as banks, McDonalds etc. have their signs in English and Chinese. Real estate and automobile advertisements, as well as Hollywood and Chinese movie trailers, are played on the big screen in Chinese, with Chinese subtitles. In terms of real estate, many newly built residential areas are named bilingually in Chinese and English, even using words and phrases such as ‘International’ or ‘California Sunshine Town’. Chinese music is also very popular and well received in the region. At the same time, the city is not far behind any other major Chinese city in terms of being up to date with American pop-culture, and the

latest Chinese or Hollywood movies. The commercial language of the city is Chinese, and people mostly converse in the same.

With China entering WTO and successfully holding the 2008 Olympic Games, English has been promoted strongly among all the schools up until 2013. At this point, there was a heated discussion whether to abolish CET 4 and remove the English subject from compulsory testing subjects in the national university entrance examination. But none of these activities or suggestions decreased students' desire to learn English. Learning English is becoming increasingly popular in the region. Within the schooling context, according to the 2001 Ministry of Education announcement English should be taught even in minority areas from primary three. In the city Hohhot, the time to introduce English subject to formal curriculum in minority schools is as early as grade two. In Chinese primary schools, the time to learn English as subject is grade one. English is tested as a major subject, and the city itself is home to many private tuition centers, where more and more parents choose to send their children. Both teachers and parents believe that learning English is now even more important, while also worrying that it is the only subject students learn yet will probably hardly use it, or forget it, once they complete their education.

b) Regulative Functions of Mongolian, Chinese and English

The regulative function of English was defined by Kachru (1983, p. 42) as 'a use of English in those contexts in which language is used to regulate conduct; for example, the legal system and administration'. Accordingly, regulative functions of Mongolian, Chinese, and English can be understood as the use of these three languages in those contexts in which language is used to regulate conduct; for example, the legal system and administration.

As mentioned before, business promotes the use of both languages: internally within China requires the use of Chinese, while any commercial interaction with Mongolia involves Mongolian. One speaks in Khalkha Mongol, while writing in Cyrillic

Mongolian.

However in court, and governmental and business meetings, Chinese is the dominant language. Any governmental exchange or communication will have Chinese as a more frequently used language than Mongolian. The government issues all its documents bilingually – namely, in Chinese and Mongolian. This includes any legal papers, and all government publications. English is used almost only between China and foreign countries, and is restricted for all diplomatic matters and business affairs, as well as in when teaching English in the classrooms.

Some teachers have complained that there are not enough resources provided to Mongolian students, as a result of which the teachers have to translate either from Chinese books or websites, thus increasing their workload. Although local teachers have suggested building a Mongolian study resource, or a data bank of some kind, this idea has not materialized due to high maintenance costs and limited usage.

c) Interpersonal function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

Interpersonal functions of a language was divided by Kachru (1983) and Velez-Rendon (2003) as a “language’s acts as a link between those who use different languages and also symbolizes modernity and prestige.” In IMAR, the interpersonal function includes science, technology and research, the media, business and tourism, and international connections.

In Hohhot, the Mongolian language is a symbol of the Mongolian identity and a tool through which Mongolians portray their culture to the outside world. In terms of media, many of the advertisements on the TV and radio are in both Mongolian and Chinese, though there is more Chinese than Mongolian. Through satellite broadcasting, all national Chinese TV channels are available in the region. If they are willing to pay an extra fee, many English channels (HBO, BBC, Star TV, etc.) can also be provided to them. CCTV 9, the main English TV channel in China, is also

available in the city. Alongside these, even telecom hotlines have trilingual language options.

Chinese is the dominant language outside of school. This case school in particular uses two curricula – one with Mongolian as the MOI, and the other with Chinese as the MOI. Students are enrolled in either one of the two – implications of which we will discuss further on in this paper. Elements of Mongolian culture has been incorporated within the teaching and learning environment in the Mongolian classrooms, while the Chinese classrooms have a variety of displays in only Chinese and English. In the whole school, students converse with one another mostly in Chinese. Interviews with the students suggest that only a small number of the Mongolian students speak in Mongolian with their parents. Once they leave the school, they are in an almost 100% Chinese-communication environment. As one Chinese teacher explained:

“Chinese is more often used than Mongolian and English here. Once students get out of the school, they all speak Chinese. They speak Chinese with their parents too. Occasionally they speak Mongolian with their parents, or in the Mongolian classroom they use Mongolian. As for English, this language is only used in necessary occasions, such as in English class or some special occasion, like speaking competitions or stage performances.”

--Chinese teacher 2

Some teachers have not only shown concern about the future of the Mongolian language, but also about current students’ Mongolian ability which has decreased due to the change in environment:

“Students in our school have very good Chinese speaking skills. But speaking well does not necessarily mean their Chinese writing skills are good. Especially if you compare their writing skills with the Han Chinese students, our Mongolian students’ Chinese writing skills are not as good as Han Chinese students’. When using Chinese, they are not very good at choosing more precise vocabulary, or form better language structure.”

--Chinese teacher 1

Both students and teachers indicate that the demographic construction, industrial

development, and the national and local policies are actually not in favor of sustaining and protecting the Mongolian language, but rather in favor of Chinese. Even the influence of English in the region is severely affected by Chinese: the situation is clearly not supportive of sustaining either of the two languages. The ethno-linguistic vitality provides little soil for English to prosper, as the language is only used in English classes or occasional business and government meetings, while the Chinese-dominant environment plays a huge impact in Chinese learning, usage, and sustainability. Both the input and usage of Chinese is far more frequent for students than Mongolian, and this consequently has a huge impact on language learning. As a teacher has stated, learning Chinese is becoming increasingly easier for Mongolian students, and eventually their Chinese proficiency will outplay their proficiency in Mongolian. Many teachers have commented on how the environment is leaning towards Chinese:

“As for the Mongolian language, sometimes our students cannot even understand the titles or questions of Mongolian reading comprehensions. I need to explain to them in Chinese. Then they would understand it better. If you ask them purely in Mongolian, they would not understand what the meaning of the question, is in the reading comprehension when analyzing it.”

--Chinese teacher 1

Latest technology, such as the Internet and mobile devices, have become major forces to spread news, to entertain, and for work and communication in the city. English websites are not often used unless preparing school classes, checking documents, or exchanging emails between business corporations and foreign countries. With pop music and the influence of the movie culture, coming from the USA and the UK, English songs and movies are very popular amongst the younger generation in the city.

The Chinese dominant situation is becoming increasingly more obvious; some teachers have shown great sadness and remorse over the current ethno-linguistic situation, but they also have no other choice but to follow the changing trend:

“Nowadays, there are not enough Mongolian reading materials for students to read outside of the classroom. If they want to read in Mongolian, what is available are only those too complicated translation of Four Ancient Master Pieces of Chinese stories or monthly magazine ‘*Naheya*’[a monthly Mongolian magazine for primary students published in IMAR] They do not have as many composition books such as ‘Collection of 100 Good Chinese Primary School Composition’, ‘New Concept Composition’ or ‘Writing Models for Primary School Writing’. Chinese students’ choices in terms of this are much more than Mongolian students’.”

--Chinese teacher 1

Overall, in the city context, the ethno-linguistic environment is strongest as far as Chinese is concerned, while Mongolian is used relatively little amongst peers or with parents, and there is little use of English except for at private tutoring classes.

4.3 City School

This section will focus on city school. The aim is to describe what model is implemented in the school, how the model is implemented, curriculum developing patterns, teachers’ and students’ attitude toward the trilingual model in their school, and how the outcome and sustainability is in terms of the three languages.

4.3.1 Context of the City School

The case city school was founded in 1985, and is located in the *Saihan* district of Hohhot city. It is one of the two Mongolian Nationality Primary schools that use Mongolian as the MOI for over half of the classes, and Chinese as the MOI for the other half. The school carries 9 years of compulsory education. Overall, there are 1,624 students (29 classes) in the school, out of which 19 of the classes have Mongolian as the MOI with a total of 1,214 Mongolian students. The rest of the students use Chinese as the MOI, and a majority of them are Han Chinese. There are also over a 100 international students from Japan, Mongolia, Korea, and Russia in this school. The staff of 104 are all Mongolian.

The school neighbors the Inner Mongolia Agricultural University. Many Mongolian parents choose to send their children to this school because of its well-established fame, excellent teacher resources, and newly built and developed hardware equipment. This school is also one of the two schools in Hohhot that admit immigrant workers' children, as long as the students learn Mongolian as a subject. For many immigrant workers, some with Chinese parents or even Mongolian parents who wish that their children to go to Chinese schools, this school is a good choice to receive primary education.

The school decoration shows strong Mongolian cultural elements with some Chinese cultural elements, on the blackboards or the decoration walls. Each classroom has the national flag placed above the blackboard. The Mongolian classrooms and corridors also have posters of Mongolian proverbs, traditional *Naadam pictures* ("game" is a traditional Mongolian festival. The games are Mongolian wrestling, horse racing and archery and are held throughout the country during midsummer), and pictures of Mongolian nature and animals. The school's name is translated into three languages, seen on the school gate.

The government emphasizes on producing outstanding Mongolian students with strong patriotic awareness, high morality, and excellent knowledge acquisition of Mongolian culture. This policy and concept is implemented through governmental aid and fiscal support. In 2009, the IMAR *Saihan* District invested 150 million RMB to rebuild the school buildings, enlarge the school area to 150,000 square meters and the dormitory area to 270,000 square meters, as well as to improve the hardware of the school. It is the only school in IMAR that has an underground playground.

The first 20 minutes of school comprises of all students performing the national standard broadcasting exercises. Various activities are organized by the school to enhance students' Mongolian cultural awareness and use of the language. The activities include poetry readings, Mongolian Naadam competition, folk dancing, and musical performances. All parents are invited to the events, and they are also

broadcasted through a local TV station.

Further on, in the following section, I will illustrate the aspects that form and make the school a strong Mongolian-centered school.

4.4.2 Design

a) Aims

Preparatory education has played a great role in improving minority students' basic cultural knowledge, and enabling more minority students to continue their studies at secondary and higher specialized schools. It has become a unique way of developing education geared towards the needs of minority students. There are three aims to keep in mind when designing the curriculum in the school. These are:

- I. To implement compulsory 9 years of education.
- II. To expose students to Mongolian instruction and the Mongolian language.
- III. To foster a sense of Mongolian culture in Mongolian students.

Like the other primary schools, this school is a place that carries out 9 years of compulsory education, in accordance with the national education policy. The school provides languages, math, science, music, art, P.E, and handcrafting subjects. The school education aims to lay a foundation of language competence and general knowledge to students, and prepare them for middle school entrance exams or further education. The design of the curriculum is based on the national educational policy and national entrance exam policy. Each subject receives an equal amount of attention. As the following quote from a teacher shows:

“Chinese is a main subject, but it is foreign language. Mongolian and Chinese receive the same amount of attention in the curriculum. The school emphasizes the importance of learning English, Chinese, and Mongolian the same amount, because of national entrance examination.”

--- Chinese teacher 1

The aim of the curriculum is to help students form their own understanding of the world, about their lives, form a critical thinking ability, and an autonomous yet cooperative learning spirit. Classroom education in the teaching process penetrates heavily on nurturing awareness about students' identity as a Mongolian ethnic minority, assisting them in getting familiar with Mongolian history, culture, traditions, philosophy, and literature. In order to better embrace the Mongolian ethnic minority culture, strengthen ethnic characteristics, and further develop minority education, the school also provides ethnic traditional culture classes, as well as Mongolian skills' specialty curricula, alongside the national standard curriculum that is widely used in IMAR.

Outside of classrooms that use Mongolian as the MOI, I have observed that teachers in even Chinese and English classrooms, when necessary, use Mongolian to elaborate questions and emphasize certain learning points. Most of the time, teachers use Mongolian to explain rules, translate questions when students are confused, and reinforce knowledge. Detailed examples of this can be found in Section 4 of this chapter.

b) Curriculum Context

There are two sets of curricula designed and implemented in this city school. One system uses Mongolian as the MOI, and the other uses Chinese, and students can choose which system they prefer to be taught under. My focus within this chapter will be on the Mongolian curriculum. As a primary school, both the Mongolian and Chinese-centered education systems are implemented in a top-down manner; the local government and its policies tend to support the development of the school. The main tasks and practices in the school lies in recognizing and reading letters, words, and articles in the three languages. Learning activities range from spelling, dictation, reading out loud, reading comprehension, and producing short articles. The training of the four basic skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, is very

balanced. Most of the teachers working under the Chinese system agree that it is an added bonus for their students to learn the Mongolian language, as it will assist them to get into a better Chinese middle school. However, despite this shared belief, the results produced by Chinese students studying Mongolian have not been very satisfactory.

The time allocation for students who study under the Mongolian system from grade 1-6 is shown in the table 4.3.2. The language is clearly the foundational learning point of Mongolian primary education. At grade one, the Mongolian instruction period is at its peak, with 13 lessons per week, as well as 3 culture lessons and 1 reading and writing class. Chinese and English classes are added to the curriculum from grade two and three respectively. They steadily remain at 5 Chinese lessons and 3 English lessons until grade six, when the time spent learning Chinese and English reach to a maximum of 6 and 5 lessons respectively.

Table 4.3.2

Mongolian as MOI: *The number of lessons dedicated to each language/subject every academic week*

	Mongolian	Chinese	English	Mongolian Culture	Mongolian Reading and Writing
Grade 1	13			3	1
Grade 2	10	5		2	2
Grade 3	9	5	3	2	
Grade 4	7	5	3	3	2
Grade 5	10	5	3	2	
Grade 6	10	6	5		

The study of both languages is rather focused on listening and speaking. However the learning of Chinese in both systems remains focused on phonetic learning, syllable identification, exercises with words and phrases, and a little bit of reading comprehension and writing.

The time allocation for students who study under the Chinese system from grade 1-6 is shown in the table 4.3.3 below.

Table 4.3.3

Chinese as MOI: *The number of lessons dedicated to each language/subject every academic week*

	Mongolian	Chinese	English	Mongolian Culture	Chinese Writing
Grade 1	4	8		2	1
Grade 2	4	9		2	1
Grade 3	3	11	4	1	
Grade 4	3	10	3	1	2
Grade 5	4	9	3	1	2
Grade 6		10	5	1	2

At grade one, Mongolian is taught as a subject but the main language for the students in this system remains Chinese. Chinese instruction reaches its peak at grade three with 11 lessons per week, and at the same time 1 Mongolian language and culture class is cut. Evidently Mongolian is taught as a subject, but it is not a foundation for studying the other subjects. At grade 6, Mongolian language learning is removed from the curriculum, so that students can focus instead on learning Chinese, English, and other subjects.

The students' learning activities in English remain on the level of carrying out Basic English conversations, recognizing and memorizing simple words and sentences, and sometimes translating from either English to Mongolian or English to Chinese. Essay writing in English is merely touched upon in this school. The school offers ethnic 'interest' classes to both Mongolian and Chinese students. There is Mongolian archery, boxing, traditional folk dance, chess, folk painting, and horse-headed fiddle classes for them to choose from. These ethnic extra-curricular activities, like all other activities, are carried out after school at 4 p.m.

On the whole, because the curriculum is different for the Chinese and Mongolian students, we can see that ethnic Mongolian style and elements are strongly embodied in the Mongolian system, but not as strongly in the Chinese system in this school. Because the Chinese students know that Mongolian is only a taught, and not assessed, subject, their Mongolian learning motivation is not very high, and therefore the results of their learning are not satisfying.

c) Use of Recourse

As mentioned previously, the IMAR *Saihan* governmental district had invested 150 million RMB in the development of this school in 2009. This verifies the government's commitment and dedication towards developing and sustaining minority education in the region. In recent years, government has invested 1.62 billion RMB for the many aspects of the provincial capital, funding for school construction and protection. Only in 2013, the capital had four provincial education policies implemented:

880 students from 3 Mongolian teach kindergartens were insured to enjoy free education expenses from investment funds 1.1 million RMB of free education for Mongolian ethnic children. IMAR has allocated 7.21 million RMB, benefiting 4,756 primary and secondary school students to learn Mongolian; the autonomous region offered 6.1 million RMB of special funds to city level schools for solving facilities and teaching equipment for special activities.

The school has a rich amount of exam resources, and maintains a good connection with other schools in other cities. The People's Education Press publishes all students and teachers' books, and there are corresponding homework books for Mongolian, Chinese, and English. Students and parents also use the local bookstores or online resources to obtain as much material as they can, in order to continuously practice

and improve language skills. According to interviews with teachers, 99% of the students either attend private tutoring classes outside of school or buy books to learn by themselves.

The following table shows students' views on the trilingual education arrangement in their school. The actual survey can be found in the Appendix.

Table 4.3.4

Students' view on education arrangement

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in this school.	G3-6	120	1	5	4.73	.715
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in this school.	G3-6	120	1	5	4.22	.853
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in this school.	G3-6	120	1	5	4.71	.633
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by this school because they know minority pupils' needs better.	G3-6	120	1	5	3.96	1.379
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.	G3-6	120	1	5	2.76	1.448
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for this school.	G3-6	120	1	5	4.70	.721
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	G3-6	120	1	5	3.46	1.608
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, Because their learning abilities differ.	G3-6	120	1	5	2.42	1.426
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.	G3-6	120	1	5	4.20	1.138
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.	G3-6	120	1	5	1.53	1.134

Table 4.3.4 indicates that item 1 received highest score (4.73), suggesting that students hold the view that minority education should be promoted more seriously in their school. Item 3 and item 6 are second and third respectively, with scores 4.71 and 4.70, indicating that students think more equipment, such as computers and language labs, should be provided for their school, and English language teaching and learning should also be improved.

The students give minimum scores of 1.53 and 2.42 to item 10 and item 8 respectively, which reflects that minority students have great confidence, like Chinese students, to learn English, and believe that English should remain in the curriculum. Not only this, but Mongolian minority students also believe that the same English standards should be applied to Mongolian students as to Han students, and there should not be any difference between the two when designing and setting the standards for Mongolian students.

The table confirms that the student interviews are similar and comparable with teachers' views on minority language education and English education, as well as the teachers' assumptions on Mongolian students' English learning competence and future learning outcomes of the language.

d) Staff Profile

Most of the teaching staff are bachelor degree holders with teaching certificates. Within the language teachers, the 19 Mongolian teachers all hold degrees and are fluent in both Mongolian and Chinese. Among the 8 Chinese language teachers, there is 1 Han Chinese teacher who does not speak nor understand Mongolian, and 1 Mongolian Chinese teacher who does not speak Mongolian but understands it. As for the 6 English language teachers, 4 of them are Mongolian, and there are 2 Han Chinese teachers who do not speak or understand Mongolian.

The numbers of Mongolian teachers occupy a large percentage of the overall staff. For each class, there is one Mongolian teacher in charge of the teaching activities, and is usually the head teacher of the class. Normally Chinese teachers have one teacher in charge of two classes each, while English teachers are in charge of 3 classes each. Both Chinese and English teachers have expressed their desire for the school to hire more teaching staff in order to decrease their workload. One Chinese teacher has said:

“We are really lacking in Chinese teachers. One Chinese teacher is responsible for 3 classes’ teaching activities. That is too much. I have to give 15 lessons each week. But Mongolian teachers only have to be in charge of 1 class. ”

--Chinese teacher 2

Some of the Mongolian teachers, as well as the dean of the school curriculum, also expressed the same concern and have noticed the heavy workload for Chinese and English teachers. But due to the educational bureau strictly controlling the number of teachers available for each subject, the arrangements of human resources has to be controlled. The school knows the reality but is helpless in this situation.

“If you look at Chinese subjects’ testing results, we definitely have very good performance. Our students not only reach the standard requirements set by our school, their scores are much higher than the required minimum score. But now, one teacher is in charge of 3 classes. If one teacher were in charge of 2 classes, wouldn’t the Chinese score become higher? ”

--Chinese teacher 2

The following table 4.3.5 shows the teachers’ view on language and education implemented in their school.

With reference to the teachers’ view on languages and language education (Table 4.3.5), item 1 (4.86) and item 10 (4.50) were evaluated to receive the first and the second highest mean scores respectively, and item 8 (3.86) was ranked third. These data indicate those teachers’ strong belief in the importance of stressing upon and learning the minority language well first. They also believe that students should learn Mongolian well first and learn the other subjects, including English, using Mongolian

as the MOI.

Table 4.3.5

Teachers' views on language and education

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well.	14	1	5	4.86	.376
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subjects.	14	1	5	1.14	.363
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils.	14	1	5	1.43	.646
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages.	14	1	5	1.93	.917
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly.	14	1	5	1.14	.363
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese.	14	1	5	1.36	.842
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the New English Standard.	14	1	5	1.57	.756
8. The language used to teach and learn English, inter-language, should be the minority language, but not Chinese Mandarin.	14	1	5	3.86	1.027
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, without bothering to learn the minority language.	14	1	5	2.21	1.424
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is, first of all, to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects, including Chinese and English equally well.	14	1	5	4.50	1.160

Teachers assigned lowest score (1.14) to item 2 and item 5, proving that the statement saying minority students have intellectually lower ability to learn languages compared with Chinese students is not true. And they strongly disagree with the saying that minority students should only learn Chinese and learn all the subjects in Chinese.

Followed by a score item 6, 3, 7, 4, and 9 with scores lower than 2.5, indicating that those teachers are strongly against the statement that minority students should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all the school subjects.

Item 3 with score of 1.43 expresses that teachers disagree that English is a difficult language for their students, and they cannot learn English as well as those Chinese students. Item 7 with score of 1.57 indicates that these teachers disagree that the English for minority students to learn English should set a lower achievement for minority students in New English Standard. Item 4 with score of 1.93 indicates that these teachers strongly disagree with statement saying that minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages. On item 9 teachers gave 2.21. Since item 9 and item 10 have contradictory statements, item 9 favors the same syllabus for the minority students as the Chinese and ignores the minority language, teacher strongly disagreed with this statement. While item 10 stresses on the importance of minority language and teachers tend to strongly agree with this statement. Item 10 with a second highest score of 4.50 indicates that teachers believe that minority students should learn their mother language well first and then they will be able to learn the other school subjects well, including Chinese and English.

4.4 Implementation

This section introduces how the trilingual language policies are implemented in the school through three aspects in classroom: teaching and learning, language of instruction, and student-teacher interaction. Referring back to the methodology chapter, this section will focus on analyzing the teacher-student communication and interaction patterns, as well as the teacher-talk content. The focus will mainly be on teaching patterns, questioning patterns, the teacher's planning and implementation of pedagogy, subject matters, and the medium of instruction on the whole. These are important variables when evaluating what model is implemented in the school. The

data that has been collected from the classrooms is also valuable in order to understand to what extent Mongolian is retained and trilingualism is achieved. Other than exam results, daily communication and activities between students and teachers is what portrays the results of trilingualism better than any other form of evidence.

4.4.1 Teaching and Learning

During the classes, there are mainly two kinds of tasks given to students by teachers: well-structured or less structured tasks. Some scholars also divide these tasks into sections like incremental tasks, restructuring tasks, enrichment tasks, and practice tasks (Bennett and Desforges, 1988). Rosenshine and Merister (1992) compressed these tasks into two sections, and defined well-structured tasks or knowledge acquisition tasks as activities that students gain knowledge through by following a sequence of fixed steps given by teachers. Less structured tasks or higher-order thinking tasks have no sequence of fixed steps to follow, but the teacher will provide a temporary model for students to interpret, transform, and modify to accomplish tasks.

The period during my visit in the school was close to the final examinations. So the classroom teaching activities were almost all well-structured tasks, such as exam preparation-oriented activities, testing students' on grammar learning objectives, spelling words, looking for synonyms/antonyms etc. The students' overall performance on these tasks was good. It is also an important aspect of daily practice, both in the lesson and for homework. Students basically learn by working in task books, doing extra exercises, or model exams. As for Mongolian and Chinese language learning, there are also less-structured tasks, such as reading comprehension and argumentative writing tasks. The teaching pedagogy is teacher-dominated and task-oriented. There is no group work seen in the classroom, but rather students doing the tasks on their own and checking their answers with the teacher. Students hardly ask the teachers any questions, and only read out their answers when the teacher asks.

When students are confused, the teachers explain either by orally explaining or writing down key words on the blackboard.

The class sizes are big in this city school, with about 45-50 students in each classroom. The students' learning ability also varies in a classroom, and hence a considerable amount of time is spent on crowd control and behavior management. Most of the students complete their homework, get it checked with feedback from the teachers, and follow-up with corrections the next day. If there are students who haven't completed their homework, they will be punished by either having to stay standing or be criticized in front of the entire class and state their reasons for not completing the work.

Mongolian exercises and work are not seriously taken by Chinese students who are learning under system of Chinese as the MOI. Mongolian is not a school entrance subject for them. The Mongolian teachers of these students seem very accepting of this attitude and therefore do not punish their students. There are, however, some Han Chinese students who still learn Mongolian very carefully, following the teacher's guidance and reading out loud or answering questions.

“To tell you the truth, most of the Chinese students cannot even read properly after learning Mongolian for 2 years. They can only write very simple characters and read very simple articles. This subject will not be included in the school entrance exam. I think this fact has a big impact on students' learning attitude. They do not need to perform well in this subject but can get into a Chinese middle school anyhow. Some of the students do not even know what the traditional five nomadic animals on plain land are for Mongolians.”

--Mongolian teacher 1

4.4.2 Language of Instruction

Classroom discourse proves that the most frequently used language is Mongolian. The language is used mainly as the teaching language within the subject of Mongolian. However, occasionally when students encounter comprehensive reading

problems, or face difficulties understanding certain vocabulary, the teachers choose to explain it in Chinese, rather than Mongolian, so the students can understand. Chinese and English lessons use Chinese as the main medium of instruction, as these lessons are more grammar and vocabulary-focused.

The basic usage of the Mongolian language is restricted to the context of homework, textbook, or workbook. There is not a large amount of examples drawn from the daily life of Mongolians, or of Mongolian history and culture. The language used and taught is rather more practical and up-to-date language, as students can use these words in their daily lives, and it remains at a primary level. When things are explained in Chinese, students seem to connect more naturally with the knowledge imparted. This language also seems to trigger their general knowledge, and pushes them to think more actively.

“Mongolian language will not disappear, but our students use Chinese more often. Even in the classroom, when you explain something in Mongolian, some students would not understand it completely. You have to use Chinese to explain sometimes. Chinese is used among peer talks, and students-parents talk outside of the school. Unless some of the parents have lived abroad, they would speak English with their children. Or speak Japanese. Other than that, the occasion to use English is almost none outside of English class.”

--Chinese teacher 3

4.4.3 Interaction between Teachers and Students

The time that I visited the school was close to the final exams. So basically, the lessons are set to prepare students for their final exams. Mostly, teachers do not teach any new concepts anymore but review old contexts by doing test papers.

Since the school has two streams of curriculum, Mongolian lessons also vary between the students who are learning under Mongolian as the MOI system and students who are learning under Chinese as the MOI system.

In the first type of system, the Mongolian lesson is observed as a non-structured

writing lesson at grade 5, given by a topic of how students are planning to spend their summer vacation. The Mongolian teacher, to a certain extent, exemplifies the three main structures of classroom discourse: initiation, response, and follow-up. The teacher gave out some examples of introduction, main body, and conclusion, which is the basic structure of the essay. In terms of body content, teacher asked students to brain storm and walked across the class checking students' progress. Then it was followed up by 20 minutes of writing, after which the teacher corrected the students' misspelling.

Mongolian is the MOI of this lesson; students learned by writing, and the teacher fulfilled giving out instructions, guiding the students, and following up with corrections. All the students in this class participated in the activity; hence the sharing of good composition was a conclusion of the whole teaching activity. The teacher pointed out some well-written sentences and beautifully used vocabulary, and gave comments on the structure of the composition. Overall, it was a very well organized lesson.

Another Mongolian lesson was given to the Chinese students who were learning Mongolian as a subject under Chinese and MOI system. The Mongolian subject is mandatory as a subject, but is not included in the middle school entrance exam in this school. Mongolian is used as MOI in grade 5 Mongolian lessons, but sometimes the teacher also uses Chinese to elaborate instructions of worksheets or activities, or explain some meaning of the words. This co-switching of languages does not seem to cause confusion among the students. The content of the lesson was to learn and identify different types of animal names in different growing stages in Mongolian. This content equals to learning content of grade 2 for Mongolian students who are learning under Mongolian as the MOI system.

A large amount of time was spent on controlling students' behavior as well as repetition of the same word to help their Mongolian vocabulary memorization. Students are given working sheets, on which the quizzes included translating Chinese to Mongolian, identifying wrong spelling in a paragraph, and explaining the selected

words in Mongolian. Students' performance in this worksheet varies. The teacher had chosen several students to read out loud the word she pointed on blackboard; some students failed in the task. There were no students raising question in this class; it was a teacher-centered lesson, the teacher initiated all the questions, and there was no group work or any well-structured tasks.

In English lessons, it was observed that the teacher code-switched between English and Chinese. This did not seem to be a problem for the students, who switched from Chinese to English, English to Chinese with apparent ease. The lessons were teacher-led; students rarely raised questions or make comprehensive readings or analyses of textbook contents. The questioning pattern is one-way/teacher-dominated. The most ordinary assessing methods were using grammar quizzes, translation, and spelling checks. There was no group discussion or group work, nor comprehensive reading or writing found in the class. Analysis of the English classroom discourse shows that the teacher talk occupied approximately 76% of the classroom instruction. Out of the total 64 questions, the teachers asked all.

4.5 Outcomes

In this section, I will discuss formal and informal assessment results of the school, in terms of students' learning outcomes, and their perception of trilingual education in their school. Their ethnic identity and general language abilities is shown in their daily performances, in terms of language outside of school.

Students' bilingual abilities vary in this school, due to the students learning under two different MOI systems. Students' ability in Mongolian writing is restricted to the extent to which they can formulate ideas in the Mongolian language, as well as their limited vocabulary. Some teachers attribute this phenomenon to the ethno-linguistic vitality outside of school, which I believe is one of the main factors that have impacted the students' Mongolian writing. The other factor is that the resources for Mongolian reading is not rich for students. Although the mass media in Hohhot does

provide Mongolian TV and radio channels, the impact and popular force of many Chinese TV shows, as well as English/American movies, reduces the amount of time and interest students put into learning Mongolian culture and knowledge as opposed to Chinese and English. For those students who are learning under Chinese as the MOI system, their Mongolian is not as good as the teachers need it to be. The teaching content is already comparatively easier than Mongolian students'. The impact of a major factor, which is that Mongolian is not included in the middle school entrance exam, has influenced students' learning attitude towards this language. Some of the students cannot even memorize Mongolian alphabets at the end of their study, nor write some Mongolian words correctly. Their Mongolian vocabulary is limited, and some cannot even carry out basic communication in Mongolian after having learnt it for a few years at primary school. One of the teachers said:

“As a matter of fact, these students' Mongolian vocabularies are quite limited. First of all they do not give this subject their full attention and effort, it is because this subject is not going to be in middle school exams. They learn it as a bonus and a helping tool to help them get enrolled in other Chinese middle schools. It is a political benefit for these Chinese students. But the learning outcome is not positive. Most of them can not even name the names of five traditional animals in Mongolian.”

---Mongolian teacher 3

Some of the Chinese teachers mentioned that there is a gap between the Mongolian and Chinese students who are studying at the same grade level. These gaps have specifically appeared when students have to write essays or complete challenging comprehensive tasks. Chinese students have a more internal knowledge structure and deeper understanding of Chinese literature than Mongolian students the same age. In essence, the grammar and vocabulary of grade 4 Mongolian students is equal to that of Chinese students at grade 2.

With this restriction of input, alongside the fact that Mongolian students are learning two foreign languages based on their mother language, the output of Mongolian students in terms of Chinese and English writing is not as good as that of Chinese students.

Although Mongolian teachers have been reminding students to use Mongolian in Mongolian class, students still communicate with each other mostly in Chinese. Also, because the ethno-linguistic environment of this community and wide usage of Chinese in communication outside of school, the situation of the Mongolian language is not as good as Chinese.

4.5.1 City School Students' Perceptions on Trilingual Education Model

Table 4.5.1 below is about a questionnaire to access students' perceptions and feelings towards their experience of the trilingual model that they have. Questions such as, whether they like the trilingual model that is implemented in their school or not, and whether they feel their Mongolian, Chinese, or English can reach a very proficient level or not when they graduate from the school, have been asked to the students to know their satisfaction level about their school's trilingual model, as well as their attitude towards it. The actual questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

Whilst analyzing the city school students' perceptions of the trilingual model in their school (Table 4.5.1), the students scored 3.68 with item 2 with a standard deviation of 1.91. This indicates that, overall, students enjoy the trilingual model that is implemented in their school.

It was also perceived that item 19 received the highest score among all the items with a score of 4.7, showing their strong wish to use English as MOI in P.E and Art. Items 14 and 4 received the second and the third highest points respectively, at 4.63 and 4.62, indicating that students feel confident that when they graduate they will achieve good proficiency in written English, and that they feel comfortable using English as the MOI in English class. But item 6, with score of 3.63, indicates that students co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject. Item 18 with a score of 4.53 and standard deviation of .947 indicates that

most of the students agreed that their speaking Mongolian can reach a high proficiency when they graduate. This is followed by item 11 that scored 4.34, showing that students are happy with their progress in their spoken English.

Table 4.5.1

City School Students' Perceptions on Trilingual Education Model

	Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I find it appropriate to start using Chinese as MOI in Chinese lessons in P2.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.15	1.125
2	I enjoy the trilingual education model implemented in the school.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.68	1.191
3	I feel comfortable switching from one language to another when studying different subjects in the school.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.85	1.390
4	I feel comfortable studying the English subject using English as the MOI.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.62	.800
5	I feel comfortable studying the Chinese subject using Chinese as the MOI.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.09	.996
6	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.63	1.029
7	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study of the Chinese subject.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.03	1.329
8	I find co-switching in different subjects useful for my language development in general.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.16	1.551
9	I am happy with my progress in the study of written English.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.60	1.460
10	I am happy with my progress in the study of written Chinese	G3-6	91	1	5	3.66	1.046
11	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.34	.859
12	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.98	1.125
13	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Mongolian.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.13	.968
14	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.63	.784
15	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.70	.960
16	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.48	.982
17	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.90	1.001
18	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Mongolian.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.53	.947
19	I would like to have P.E and Art to be taught in English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.77	.616

The score for satisfaction of speaking Mongolian for those students' shows through item 13 at 4.13, which is lower than their satisfaction in speaking English. It was also clear that overall the students feel it is appropriate to start learning Chinese from grade 2 using Chinese as the MOI. Items 17, 15, and 10 with scores of 3.90, 3.70, and 3.66 respectively show that these students are confident that their spoken Chinese and written Chinese can achieve a good proficiency when they graduate, and they are currently happy with their progress in Chinese. The lowest scoring item is item 7 with a score of 2.03.

It was apparent that they disagreed with the saying that they co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study of the Chinese subject. The second lowest score is item 8, at 2.16. This indicates that they think co-switching in different subjects is not useful for their language development in general. In terms of their progress in English writing, the students' attitude is neutral, with item 9 scoring 2.60.

It is frequently expressed in the teachers' interviews that they believe their students perform the best in Chinese among the three languages taught in their school. The school has its own standard of measuring the students' learning progress: they have a score point system, and all the students are required to pass the mark bend, in which the Chinese score is usually above 90 out of a 100. This is the result of one teacher being in charge of 3 classroom-teaching activities. If the school had more Chinese teaching staff, and each class had its own Chinese teacher, then the result would be even better.

As for the English performance, English teachers believe that Mongolian students have better performance in English than Han Chinese students, in terms of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This phenomenon is consistent with Jim Cummin's threshold hypothesis, as by the time English is introduced to the curriculum Mongolian students have already learnt Mongolian and Chinese. Hence, learning another foreign language based on the two languages will be easier and faster for Mongolian students.

This outcome result invalidates the former misunderstanding that society has towards minority students: a saying that states minority students cannot learn English well, because they are intellectually not as bright linguistically as the Chinese. As we have seen, this contradicts with Cummin's threshold hypothesis and is not true. One English teacher stated in the interview:

“Mongolian students not only can learn English well, they can learn English better than Han Chinese students while manage to learn three languages.”

--English teacher 3

4.5.2 Assessment

The school has its own assessing system. They adapt examinations from different cities in IMAR and set up their own standards and point score system for each subject. There are three major tests for students to take: the monthly tests, mid-term test, and final test. Except for the final tests, which are the same city-wide and issued by educational bureau, the rest of the exams are all from different resources by the district education bureau or borrowed tests from other cities. While students are being tested, the educational bureau is also assessing the teachers' performance. This is through their students' performance, internal assessment done by colleagues, and an official assessment done each semester by the bureau. An assessment criterion includes the students' scores, the teachers' lesson plans, and lesson observations.

Chinese and English teachers have expressed their anxiety over the heavy workload, as most of them have 18 lessons each week. English teachers also suggested that researchers or officials design the content for assessment, lesson plans, and weekly schedules. The officials from the educational bureau who assess teachers' performance do not have the correct perception and first-hand knowledge of the real teaching context. This leads to a gap between the teacher-assessing system and real teaching activities.

As mentioned above, the assessment of teachers' performance includes their lesson plans, teaching competition results, their students' performance in the tests, and the school's managing team's observation. It is complained by some teachers that there is a big gap between the design of textbook and time allocation, and the real implemented time frame. They think that national and local educational bureaus do not take into account the comprehensive challenges of the teaching situation, and the time-consuming teaching realities due to the students' varying learning abilities. This problem is significant and severe for many English teachers, as explaining or elaborating in English using other languages is already time consuming. To meet the standard in such a challenging situation is tricky. Therefore teaching results are not so positive in terms of teaching efficiency and learning quality of the students.

4.6 Sustainability

In this section, my prime focus will be discussing the sustainability of the balanced trilingual model that is implemented in the city school. This will include the sustainability of the trilingual model, sustainability of students' learning outcomes and language ability, and the sustainability of the Mongolian culture, which is hindered under this model.

The balanced model is not in favor of sustaining Mongolian culture as much as the accretive model. The balanced model means two streams: the ethnic language and Chinese occupies an equal amount of time in the curriculum and English is introduced later. This model is usually found in areas of balanced demographics, and serves to encourage social harmony. An accretive model means a strong presence of the ethnic language in the curriculum and as the medium of instruction. It introduces Chinese at an early stage, and English at a later stage. Usually this model is found in areas where the ethnic minority language is robustly supported.

Although the case school has spent many money and put in a lot of effort in

designing the curriculum, the overall classroom management, classroom decoration, and its teaching activities are still not strong enough to stand up against the impact of the ethno-linguistic environment outside of the school. The most widely used language in the community is not Mongolian, but Chinese. Once these students get into society, their Chinese writing and reading skills will frequently be put to use. Meanwhile, Mongolian reading and writing will hardly be used. But since most of the students' parents are Mongolian, the Mongolian language can still be found in daily communication within the family context. But the level of vocabulary or its context would be restricted at the daily communication level.

In the balanced model, students' Chinese ability is developed the best out of all of the three languages. But the problem is although these students' Chinese is good in this school comparatively, it is not as good as Chinese students' who attended Han Chinese primary schools. Competing with Chinese majority, the students who have attended accretive model or balanced model schooling do not have language advantages in terms of reading, writing, and self-expression in Chinese.

English is the least used language for students. Although it has been found that Mongolian students' English performance is better than Han students' in examinations, this is only on paper and on special occasions, such as competitions in speaking or singing. Mongolian students have better ability in pronunciation because they have the basic foundation of learning Mongolian first and then learning Chinese Pinyin. They also have better listening skills because Mongolian is like English, and can be recognized by letter formations. Still, in IMAR, the occasions for using English are limited. Unless students go aboard to study or work in joint or foreign companies, or teach English, the language will cease to be used and slowly be forgotten.

4.7 Discussion

This section will focus on how the balanced model is implemented in the city school.

After looking at the case study school in more detail, I would like to discuss the curriculum developing trends and the overall assimilating pattern of both models in the city school.

4.7.1 Distribution of School Curriculum in City School for Mongolian Students

The following Figure 4.7.1 is an illustration of the curriculum development tendency in the city school that uses the Mongolian as the MOI.

Figure 4.7.1 is a distribution of the curriculum for students who are learning under Mongolian as the MOI system in the city school in this study. This figure shows that Chinese is introduced to the curriculum in grade 2, and English is introduced in grade 3; Mongolian students slowly move towards becoming trilingual.

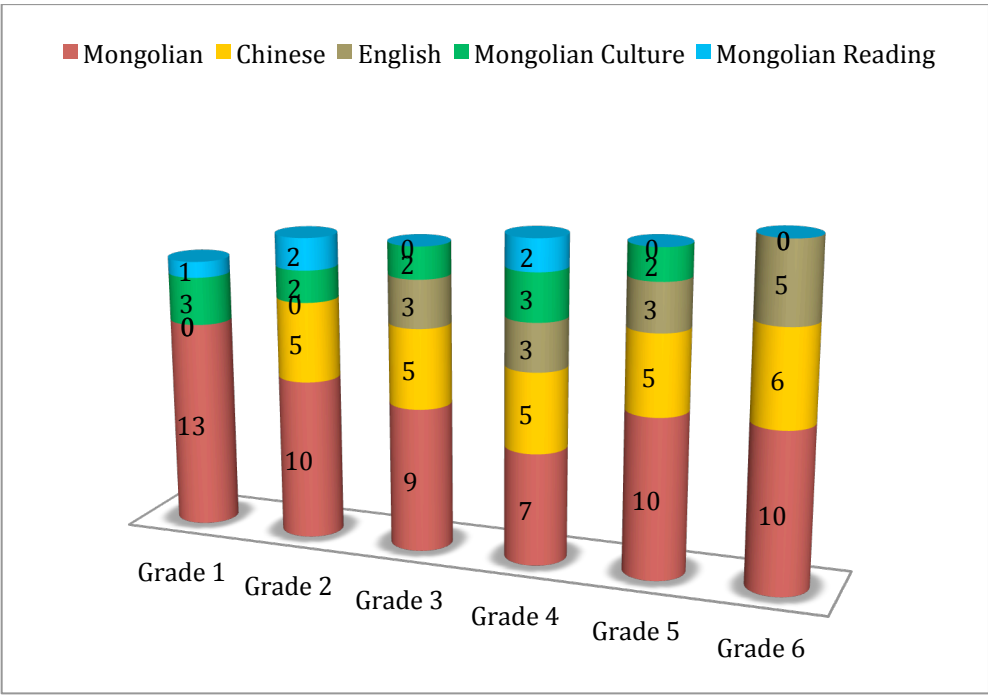


Figure 4.7.1 Distribution of school curriculum in the city school for Mongolian students

By the time the students reach grade 4, there appears to be a balanced learning time distribution of all three languages, as we can see almost a balanced amount of time allocation in the curriculum. It is because by the time students reach grade 4, they overcome the difficulties of identifying phonemic and pictographic differences amongst the three languages. Mongolian, being taught as the foundational and first language of learning, has to give space to other two languages, and decrease from its lessons from 23 to 7 per week. It has almost decreased by 50% of the teaching lessons. Grade 3 and grade 4 is the time when students are most challenged in terms of identifying the phonemic characteristics of the Mongolian alphabet, the Chinese Pin Yin, and the English letters from one another.

Many teachers have shown their concern that learning three complete different languages is very confusing for students at such a young age, and have suggested to postpone the time to introduce Chinese and English: by moving these languages to grade 3 and grade 6 respectively, teachers want to avoid unnecessary confusion caused by the similarities between the phonemic alphabet and pictographs of the three languages. By the time students reach grade 5, Mongolian reading is replaced by writing in the Mongolian class, and the overall hours dedicated to Mongolian teaching has increased.

The purpose of Mongolian reading is to practice students' reading skills – from spelling to comprehensive reading – and increase their vocabulary. Mongolian, as the first and main language of the medium of instruction, requires a solid input in the four aspects. This school has implemented this and has laid a good foundation of the L1 for its Mongolian students. Chinese teaching hours have shortened, because the ethno-linguistic vitality is already in favor of the learning and practicing of this language. Thus, English and Mongolian need more time in the curriculum to enhance the students' learning, and ensure good results in the school entrance exams. Combining the ethno-linguistic environment of the community and the teaching hours that are distributed to each language during different periods, the outcome of this curriculum shows that students who go through it form a balanced ability in trilingualism.

4.7.2 Distribution of School Curriculum in the City School for Chinese Students

The following Figure 4.7.2 is a graph shows curriculum-developing trend of Chinese students in the city school:

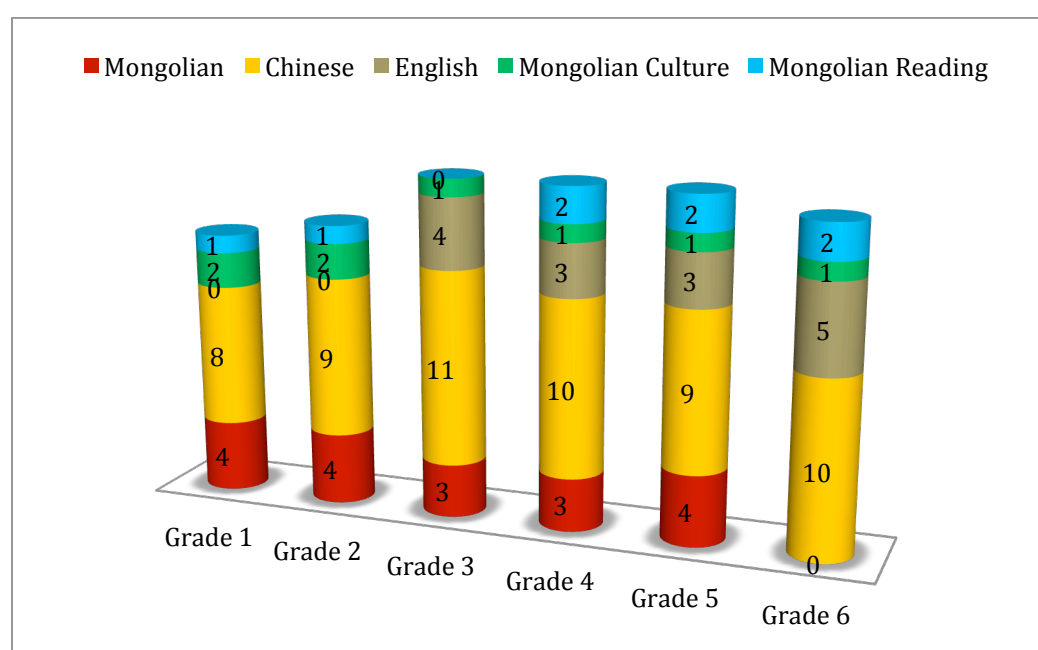


Figure 4.7.2 Distribution of school curriculum in the city school for Chinese students

Figure 4.7.2 is about distribution of curriculum for students who are learning under Chinese as the MOI system in the city school in this study. Chinese occupies most of the teaching hours throughout the whole curriculum. Mongolian gives way to English after students have gained solid foundation knowledge of Mongolian grammar, spelling and pronunciation, simple reading, and simple narrative writing skills. Mongolian is in the curriculum from grade 1 to grade 5.

By the time they reach grade 6, there are only Mongolian reading lessons left to remind students of what they have learnt, and serves the aim of consolidating their

Mongolian knowledge. Another factor that affects this change is the exam policy. As I have mentioned previously, for the students who are under the Chinese curriculum, Mongolian is only learnt as a subject and not a testing subject for the school entrance exam. The experience of being exposed to the Mongolian language and culture, gaining basic communication and reading skills, is much more important than testing results for those students. For many students attending Chinese middle schools, Mongolian will no longer be taught after primary school. Here the Mongolian subject serves as a tool to initiate students who learn under Chinese system, and allows them to be favored for middle school entrance purposes.

4.8 Conclusion

A balanced model is implemented in this city school. This section will focus on summarizing how the model is implemented in the school, what are the teacher and students' attitudes towards trilingual education implemented in the school, and students' learning outcomes and factors hindering this implementation.

This school carries out the balanced model of trilingual education overall. It is located in a community where the Chinese and many other minority groups live together, and in a strong Chinese dominating ethno-linguistic environment. As I have mentioned previously in this chapter, students and parents communicate fluently in Mongolian and in Chinese. Peer talks are bilingual, and classes are taught using mainly either Mongolian or Chinese as the main medium of instruction. The school environment and display show a mix of Mongolian and Chinese culture, and with little English posters or words mixed among them.

To some students who experience the Mongolian curriculum, Mongolian language occupies most of the teaching hours, along with Mongolian cultural interest classes. Mongolian students' language outcomes show that they have high competence in Mongolian comprehensive reading, writing, listening, and speaking by the end of

primary school. Along with their outstanding performance in their mother language, these students also acquire strong competence in Chinese and English without it costing their mother language. Students, in the end, are able to form strong Mongolian identities, and feel confident about their trilingual education, while also treasuring their roots, and feel proud of the Mongolian language. Test results and teachers' interviews all show that Mongolian students' performance in English tests is even better than Han Chinese students' in general – especially in terms of speaking and listening. This model has fostered trilingualism, and serves the purpose of social harmony, as well as preparing Mongolian students who will most likely attend a Chinese or Mongolian middle school with strong trilingual competence.

The students who experience the Chinese curriculum, by the end of the school year, develop solid ability in Mongolian reading, writing, and spelling. Their performance in Chinese also remains the same standard as Han students who attend other Han primary schools without learning Mongolian as a subject. In this aspect, Mongolian is well-reserved in the school. By the end of primary school, students who go through the Chinese curriculum also gain strong competence in all three languages. They have the advantage of knowing the Mongolian language when attending a complete Han middle school, with good Chinese and English competence.

The balanced model is achieved under a coherent system of design, delivery, assessment of outcomes, and the sustaining of outcomes. Cooperative relationships between many sectors – from government officials, the educational bureau, and the local government to the school principal, the managing leadership team, teachers, stakeholders, and publishers – all contribute to the successful carrying out of this trilingual education system.

As I discussed earlier, some teachers have suggested in their interviews that the time to introduce Chinese should be postponed to grade 3, due to the Mongolian language's lexical complications. As for English, some teachers believe it, too, is taught too early, and suggest to postpone its introduction to grade 6. There is no clear evidence in the curriculum distribution that Mongolian is affected by the introduction

of Chinese or English, for the Mongolian students. However, due to the ethno-linguistic vitality in the community and society, it can be said without a doubt that the Mongolian language is clearly impacted, and its use decreases due to the Chinese-dominated phenomenon. As for the students under the Chinese system, because Mongolian is only taught as a non-examining subject, the sustainability of this language immediately becomes very low for them.

Factors that are fostering the implementation of trilingualism are the historical, political, and demographic factors, as well as national policy, the government's financial support, teacher resources and teacher development, and the stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions on Mongolian education. There are also factors that hinder the sustainability of the language: the urbanization policy and immigrant workers group, for example. A newly emerging social elite has become the school's main student resource. The beneficial policy, that if a Han student chose to learn Mongolian as a subject in the school she would get access to a better middle school, has favored many immigrant workers. But when it comes to sustainability, it is clear that the language will not be as widely used as Chinese for the Chinese students. Just like English, the Mongolian language for them is a foreign language subject. But, unlike English, Mongolian is not even included in the middle school entrance test. The ethnolinguistic environment for Mongolian is maybe better than English, but not good enough to make it a dominant language like Chinese. Weighing the resources that are put into the teaching and developing of Mongolian among Chinese students, it is difficult to deduce whether this is worthwhile in this situation or not. These are findings from the city school that I have studied. Due to its geographic location and economic features, this school is a little special. So, drawing conclusions to my research question based on this 1 school only is not valid in order to illustrate the problem, and provide the whole picture. The next chapter will do the same introduction and analysis of a school located in a town within *Baotou* city.

Chapter 5

The Banner (Town) School

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the case study of a town school in IMAR. The school has an old tradition, and is famous for its Mongolian teachings – especially known for being flexible in minority education. “Banner” (town) is a special demographic term used in IMAR to differentiate the area from the city and countryside. The population of a banner is similar to the population of a town in other areas in inland China. This particular town school, within the region of Baotou, is close to the Mongolian border between China and Mongolia. Economically, this town mainly develops underground resources and nomadic products. Although access of data has been easy in this school for me, I have also chosen to do my study here because it reflects the current minority education status quo. Some problems have also been discovered here about rural minority education.

In accordance to the format of the previous chapter’s case study, I will once again be providing a detailed analysis of the case school from four dimensions: policy design, policy implementation, teaching outcome, and sustainability. The rest of this chapter will also follow the format of the previous chapter. Towards the end of this section, I will deduce the key features of the school to explain why it is a strong Model 1 school of the four models identified by Feng and Adamson (2013), as well as the challenges faced when implementing trilingual educational policies. Finally, I will conclude with certain examples and methods that can be learnt from this particular school in terms of sustaining the Mongolian language.

5.2 Baotou City Context

In this section, I will elaborate on the context of *Baotou* city and the community

where the case school exists. *Baotou* is a mid-sized industrial city in IMAR. Governed as a prefecture-level city, its urban area is home to a population of approximately 1.78 million, with a total population of over 2.65 million when accounting the counties under its jurisdiction. The city's Mongolian name means, "place with deer", and an alternate name is "*Lucheng*", meaning "Deer City". *Baotou* is located in the west of IMAR, at the junction of two economic zones: the *Bohai* Economic Rim and the Upper Yellow River Natural Resources Enrichment Zone. Its administrative area borders Mongolia to the north, while the Yellow River, which flows for 214 kilometers (133 mi) in the prefecture, is south of the urban area itself. The *Tumochuan* Plateau, *Hetao* Plateau, and *Yin* Mountains cross the urban area and central part of the prefecture.

Geographically, the case school that I studied is located within the *Baotou* city region but close to the Mongolia-China border, which offers a good platform to use Mongolian. This town is 150km away from Hohhot city, and 160km away from Baotou city. The special geographical location of this small town has also drawn attention from the government that has built a military base here. Except for the routine primary level education the students must receive, patriotic education is also added to their education to reinforce the Sino-Mongolia border harmony.

5.2.1 Demography

Demographically, the Mongolian language does not have an advantage in this area. Baotou is a multi-ethnic place, with a total of 31 ethnic groups in the city. The ethnic minority population is 150,856 (2010 Census), accounting for 5.69% of the total population. There are three major minorities in Baotou whose population is over thousand: namely, the Mongolian, Hui, and Manchu minorities. According to the 2010 Census (Statistics and Census Service, 2012), 94.31% of population in Baotou is Han Chinese, while 3.21% is Mongolian (Table 5.2.1).

Table 5.2.1

Ethnic groups in Baotou, 2010 census.

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
Han Chinese	2,499,508	94.31%
Mongol	85,121	3.21%
The others	65,735	2.48%

Baotou claims to be the second largest city in IMAR, but with only 3.21% of total population being Mongolian, Chinese is still the dominant language in culture interaction, business, and education. The data in the table above indicates that, in terms of demographic percentages, the city is strongly Han-dominated, and Mongolian and English do not have favorable elements compared with Chinese in the society. This factor has a strong impact on the sustainability of the Mongolian language, and sets strong barriers in terms of implementing trilingual education here. Not only do the demographics have a huge impact upon trilingual education, but also the economic situation plays an equally important role in terms of trilingualism.

5.2.2 Economy

Baotou city is the world's largest producer of rare earth metals. Other than rare earth metals, and the steel-iron industry, the five major industries in Baotou are the non-ferrous metal smelting and rolling, ferrous metal smelting and rolling, coal mining and washing, ferrous metal mining, and the chemical materials and products industry. These made a total profit of 5.86 billion RMB in 2013, accounting for 66.7% of the city's total profits.

Economically, what is happening in this city is not in favor of sustaining the Mongolian language. A rapid growth of the local mining industry has changed their homeland surface, replacing prairie area into mine area. Mongolians have witnessed how the mining industry is contributing to local economic growth, but at the same time it has been destroying the landscape and ecological system of the area harming

Mongolian culture preservation. Consequently, contradicting with the social economic growth, Mongolian culture and language is facing more and more developing obstacles. Especially in the recent decades, the tension between Han mineral investors and the local government is heated to such an extent that a local nomad has even been killed over arguments on land rights. So the rationale here is to introduce the industrial and demographic context, as both are not in favor of sustaining the Mongolian language, and have rather become two of the major factors that endanger trilingual education.

To a certain extent, Mongolian and English are fostered between the region and international economic bodies – Mongolia and other global organizations. The industry and trade between different countries and China have fostered the use of English. Baotou is a close neighbor of another underground resources and minerals country – Mongolia – and this factor cultivates the use of the Mongolian language.

Chinese trading and the overall global setting are largely in favor of English and Chinese. The demographic features and the banning of the nomad policy constitutionally has a bigger impact on the survival of Mongolian. Chinese is clearly the most widely used and most useful language, as it benefits from the trading within China, while English is restricted within the business context when trading internationally. After looking at the economic impact on trilingualism, I will now focus on the community where the attention will be on how the three languages are distributed in the everyday lives of the citizens, and hence look closely into the situation of trilingualism in the society.

5.2.3 Ethno-linguistic Environment

The case school is a Mongolian nationality primary school in a town called *Bailingmiao*. This town is 150km away from the main city of *Baotou*, but falls under the region of *Baotou*. It is the only town that has the largest Mongolian population with over 17,000 people, and over 120,000 Chinese. In order to determine the

ethno-linguistic environment, I have conducted field observations, community observations, and talked to the people in the community, teachers, and parents. The observation sheet can be found in the Appendix.

a) Instrumental Function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

Similar to *Hohhot*, Mongolian is also the main communicative language amongst Mongolians in the community of the school, as well as being the medium of instruction. Cooperation between, and the collaboration of, the school, its stakeholders, the community supporters, and the local media, ensure that Mongolian education remains strong in the area.

Schools also play a major role in organizing annual Mongolian cultural activities, which cover many elements and aspects of Mongolian culture. Just as with *Hohhot*, students who partake in extra-curricular ethnic classes and have mastered the Mongol dance and traditional Mongolian instruments are constantly invited to perform for visiting guests or events that are broadcasted. They have also represented their school in the *Naadam* opening event and in *Hohhot* (“game” is a traditional Mongolian festival. The games are Mongolian wrestling, horse racing and archery and are held throughout the country during midsummer) . This town also has a combined Chinese culture from *Shaanxi*, *Ningxia*, and the *Baotou* Chinese themselves; Chinese students give various kinds of performances that is characterized with strong Northern Chinese/*Shaanxi* styles of dance and dialect. Special performances that are performed in Chinese and other local dialects are also very popular amongst the Chinese. Overall, there are over 10,000 Chinese students in 5 primary and 1 secondary school, where Chinese is used as the medium of instruction.

Although the town holds culture festivals each year to attract tourism and popularize Mongolian culture, it is not difficult to see that Mongolian livelihood and culture is slowly weakening due to the influence of Chinese and English – even in a town as small as this. It shares an 88.3km border with Mongolia, which holds some impact.

Mongolian culture still remains as strong feature of this town, with events such as the Grassland Cultural Festival being held each year to celebrate traditional Mongolian conventions.

The street signs around the town are bilingual, and the decoration in the playgrounds is a mixture of Mongolian and Han culture; the central playground is decorated with a sculpture of the Mongolian Sulte (arrow), alongside a stone painting that depicts nomadic lifestyle of over a thousand years ago. One can also hear international pop music, such as “Gangnam Style”, or music by Rihanna or Usher. Hollywood movie trailers are continuously played on the screens, alongside cultural festival advertisements, with Chinese subtitles. Even in a town this size, English is becoming a part of the culture.

“Learning English seems like has become a social phenomenon, compared with countryside school, English in this school has improved a lot. Mongolian students in this school can understand teacher even if the teacher only speaks in English. P1 can understand, P6 can understand too.”

--Chinese teacher 3

The English language is used to teach English subjects in the community. Although there are no academic publications, English learning is becoming increasingly popular. Similar to the phenomenon in Hohhot, many parents choose to send their children to private tutoring centers to improve their English skills, and believe that learning English is now even more important, while also worrying that it is the only subject students learn yet will probably hardly use it, or forget it, once they complete their education.

b) Regulative Functions of Mongolian, Chinese and English

Government documents are issued bilingually, namely in Chinese and Mongolian.

For the local legal system and administrative language, there are also Mongolian and

Chinese versions for each.

For business Chinese is the main used language, as there are many Mainland Chinese investors working within this small town in mining, construction, or the real estate industry. When the locals or Chinese do business with Mongolia, Chinese and Mongolian are both used. Contracts between factories or businessman in this town and Mongolia are in two versions of Cyrillic Mongolian and written Chinese. If the cooperation partner is western country, such as Germany, Britain, or Sweden, the contract language is Chinese and English; business conversations will use Mongolian besides Chinese and English.

But in the courtroom and meetings, Chinese is dominant language. Chinese is used more frequently than Mongolian for government officials' communication and exchange of documents. English is only restricted within the area of diplomatic matters or business with foreign countries, private tutoring, or teaching English subjects in the school.

Some teachers have complained that studying material provided for the Mongolian language is not useful nor there are not sufficient workbooks available in the market, and therefore teachers have to translate from either Chinese books or websites. This has, in turn, increased their workload significantly. Although local teachers have raised suggestions to build up a Mongolian studying resource data center, due to the high cost of maintenance and little use of targeted audience, this project does not have strong sustainability.

c) Interpersonal Function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

Just as in the Hohhot city, the Mongolian language in *Baotou* serves as a symbol of the Mongolian identity – a tool through which they express their culture to the outside world. In terms of media, many of the advertisements on the TV and radio are in both Mongolian and Chinese. Due to satellite broadcasting, all national Chinese TV

channels are available in the town. If they are willing to pay an extra fee, many English channels (HBO, BBC, Star TV, etc) can also be provided to them. CCTV 9, the main English TV channel in China, is also available in the city. Alongside these, telecom hotlines, and radio systems have bilingual language options.

As for the latest popular medium of communication, Wechat (micro message, or a mobile text and voice messaging communication service developed by Tencent in China) and Weibo (Chinese microblogging, akin to a hybrid of Twitter and Facebook), both are used in Chinese. Local citizens are used to messaging, photo/video sharing, location sharing. There is content that is in the Mongolian language; however due to the high maintenance fee for the Mongolian software, Mongolian language micro-blogging or micro-chat service functions are limited.

“Mongolian teaching time should be more than the time invested in Chinese teaching time. Nowadays, TV is in Chinese, students speak to each other also in Chinese, it is a Chinese dominant environment outside (of school). If it was like Mongolian countryside where it was used to be like, there are not Chinese students or Chinese in rural town; our students’ Mongolian would be better than current competence. Unfortunately that is not the case.”

--Chinese teacher 2

With over 92% of the population Han Chinese, Chinese is without a doubt the dominant language outside of school. Other than that, the TV, Internet, movies, business, and even learning resources in the market are mostly in Chinese.

“Now, Chinese ability is almost as good as Mongolian ability, maybe even better than Mongolian. They show more interest in learning Chinese than learning Mongolian, video games are in Chinese, movies, TV is in Chinese, there is no Mongolian games anymore.”

--Chinese teacher 2

Some teachers have not only shown concern about the future of the Mongolian language, but also about current students’ Mongolian ability, which has decreased due to the change in environment.

“I do not know what will happen in the future, maybe in 10 years Chinese will become global

language (laughter). But Mongolian students must learn Mongolian. It is their mother language. If as Mongolian we think learning Mongolian is not necessary, it is not necessary for work, then no one would speak the language, I mean, now students' Mongolian ability is already lower compared with students in the past. The speaking ability, Mongolian comprehensive abilities and other aspects are lower. What if slowly we are assimilated by Han?"

--English teacher 2

"Nomadic living is banned according to policy. There is not the kind of locale like we used to have. If we want to communicate with each other, we send SMS in Chinese. Even if we want to send in Mongolian, there is not that kind of software to support it. So our power is not big (enough to make a change). If it were like pastoral life like we used to have, if the children live in pastoral countryside, it would facilitate Mongolian learning. But not pastoral living is banned. All the villages are moved out from grassland, they immigrant to towns, are settled here."

--Chinese teacher 3

The overall teaching and learning environment in the school supports a strong Mongolian atmosphere and cultural declaration. There are also displays in Chinese and English. Students mostly talk to each other in Mongolian, and only sometimes speak Chinese on the playground. Interviews with students show that they speak Mongolian with their parents, but outside of school some of them also speak Chinese very well.

"Of course I would use Chinese when I am outside of school in the society. Because if I spoke Mongolian, I could sense a kind of discrimination from the shop keepers or waiter as if I am from remote area, stupid or poor."

--Student b from Grade 5

Overall the ethno-linguistic vitality is Mongolian-dominant in the school and at home, but Chinese dominant in the community and in society. There is little use of English except at private tutoring centers.

5.3 Town school

In this section I will talk about the town school that I visited and observed for this

study. The following several aspects will be analyzed in this section: context of the school, design and implementation of curriculum, teaching and learning activities, outcomes, and sustainability of students' learning outcome.

5.3.1 Context of the Town School

This school was founded in 1974, and is located in the least population density area within the Baotou city region but 160km away from the main city of Baotou. In 1998, this school merged with another local primary school, and become the only Mongolian ethnic primary school in the town. This school is a Mongolian school that carries 9 years of compulsory education. There are 576 students and 91 staff in the school, and all are Mongolian.

The overall school decoration consists of strong Mongolian cultural elements with some Chinese characters written on the blackboard or on the decoration wall. Each classroom has a picture of Genghis Khan on top of the blackboard. There are many posters of Mongolian proverbs, poems, and pictures from the traditional Mongolian *Naadam*, the worshipping *Obbo*, and instruments in classroom and corridors. The school gate is a shape of sculpture of Mongolian ancient history, called the “Secret History of Mongol”, as well as the sculpture of a running horse in front of the school building.

This school is located close to the Mongolia, border. Hence one specific feature of this school, that others do not have, is that the government emphasizes on nurturing students with strong patriotic awareness, cooperative citizenship, and military knowledge. This is also shown in school decoration, with many posters of the Chinese army and communist party slogans pasted on the walls.

Every school day, students gather on the playground and practice the Mongolian *Andai* dance (a form of group dance) for 20 minutes. Other Han schools perform nationally broadcasted gymnastic activities during this time. Various activities are

organized by the school to enhance the students' cultural awareness and language usage. These activities include poetry readings, *Naadam* (games) competitions, Mongolian folk dancing, and musical activities. All parents are invited to the events that are also broadcasted through the local TV stations.

5.3.2 Design

a) Aims

Preparatory education has played a great role in improving minority students' basic cultural knowledge, and enabling more minority students to continue their studies at secondary and higher specialized schools. It has become a unique way of developing education geared to the needs of minority students. There are three aims to design curriculum in the school. The aims are:

- a) To implement compulsory 9 years education.
- b) To expose students to Mongolian instruction and the Mongolian language.
- c) To foster a sense of Mongolian culture in Mongolian students.
- d) To receive patriotic and national defense knowledge, due to the school's special geographic location.

The case school carries out 9 years of compulsory education according to national education policy. The school provides languages, math, science, music, art, P.E and handcrafting subjects to the students. It penetrates heavily on nurturing Mongolian pupils' awareness about their identity; to form a deep understanding and inner knowledge of Mongolian history, culture, traditions, philosophy, and literature. Mongolian language is the foundation of learning all the other subjects in this school, and plays a key role in education.

This school is different from the other two case schools because there is special extra curriculum that is explicitly provided to students. They learn Mongolian horse headed

fiddle, Mongolian dancing, and Mongolian chess. Another different phenomenon is that this school has decided every morning to have 1 extra Mongolian reading lesson. This was a decision made after the school found out two years ago that students' Mongolian ability had the tendency to worsen in tests. In order to secure students' good Mongolian performances, the school made this change to the curriculum. It is observed that Mongolian serves for the following functions in the classes: elaborate questions and emphasize learning points when necessary, explaining rules, translating questions when the students are confused, and reinforce knowledge. More detailed examples are in section 4.

b) Curriculum Context

As a minority school, Mongolian-centered education is implemented top-down, and the local government and policy tends to support minority development in the school. The main tasks and practices in the school lies in recognizing and reading letters, words, and articles in three languages. Learning activities range from spelling, dictation, and reading out loud to reading comprehension and producing short articles. The training of the four basic skills in Mongolian, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are all very balanced.

The Mongolian language is the main medium of instruction from primary 1 to 6 in this school. At grade 2, the Mongolian instruction period will reach its peak of 8 lessons per week, plus 5 Mongolian reading classes per week as well. As we can see, Mongolian is the foundation of education in this school.

The time allocated to all three languages and Mongolian culture is shown below in table 5.3.2. Chinese and English are formally added as subjects to the curriculum from grade 2. Chinese and English is rather focused on listening and speaking. Students in this school have strong Mongolian language abilities, and their general knowledge in Mongolian tradition, culture, and folk stories is higher than students from other areas in IMAR.

Table 5.3.2

The number of lessons dedicated to each language/subject every academic week

	Mongolian	Chinese	English	Mongolian Culture	Mongolian Reading
Grade 1	7	2	1	3	5
Grade 2	8	4	2	2	5
Grade 3	7	5	3	1	5
Grade 4	6	5	4	1	5
Grade 5	6	6	3	1	5
Grade 6	6	6	4	1	5

The Chinese language is taught through phonetic learning, syllable identification, word and phrase exercises, and slightly with reading comprehension and writing exercises.

“Mostly, Chinese reading lesson is given once or twice a week in P1. The standard curriculum is designed to have 4 Chinese lessons per week from P2. So Chinese reading class is added by our school, 1-2 lessons per week. It is aimed to set the foundation for students to learn Chinese and have a smooth transition. In the past Chinese was taught from P3. But now Chinese is taught formally as a school subject from P2. The other places are starting (Chinese) from P3. The other schools in other places start teaching English and Chinese from P3. Later, change was made in our school; maybe some other schools have changed their curriculum too. It was changed 5/6 years ago. From P1, Mongolian students start to learn Chinese Conversation, and from grade 2, they start to learn Chinese as a formal subject. It’s been like this for 5/6 years now.”

--Chinese teacher 2

Not only has the time of introducing Chinese to the curriculum been moved forward by a year in this school, changes are even made to the formal teaching period each week in order to lengthen the number of Chinese classes – which are more than what the national curriculum suggests.

“Why the time to introduce Chinese to curriculum moved from P3 to P2 was because school wants to improve students’ Chinese ability. But since the change, Chinese has been improved

and Mongolian has got impacted.”

--Chinese teacher 3

The school has made several changes in the recent years in order to improve the Chinese ability of the students. As a teacher explained during the interview, the school has introduced Chinese in P1 to ensure students are prepared and warmed up to learn the language efficiently.

“Chinese reading class in P1 is aimed to prepare and warm up students to learn Chinese. School is worried if Chinese lesson is delivered directly following national curriculum requirement, students may have difficulties accepting it. It is because these Mongolian students are taught in Mongolian in their pre-school.”

--Chinese subject teacher 1

The school has taken the same measures to have students exposed to more English via an increase in hours, by moving the introduction time from P3 to P1, and giving extra classes to English teachers. The following quotes from teachers explain the allocation of teaching time and the teaching context:

“There should be 3 lessons for English each week according to the national curriculum standard. But in our school if there is extra class time available they will give the time to English. English lesson in P1 and P2 are all added to the curriculum by our school. The reason for doing that is because there are not many learning subjects in P1 and P2. There is 1 Chinese lesson in P1, only communication class. We only teach little things to the students, such as, hello, English songs to let them form a sense in English. There is no text books, we teach them ourselves.”

--English teacher 1

The students’ learning activities in English remain at the level of carrying out Basic English conversation, recognizing and memorizing simple words or sentences, and sometimes translating, either from English to Mongolian or from English to Chinese. Essay writing in English is merely touched upon in this school.

“English is a subject. The textbooks are designed to learn from P3. But our school starts from P1 to let students come in contact with English. 1 lesson per week, 2 lesson per week from P2. The English is delivered in degree step-up methods. 3 lessons per week in P3, 4 lessons per

week in P4, but in P5, there are 3 lessons per week and in P6 there are 4 lessons per week.”

--English teacher 2

The school’s special ethnic curriculum includes Mongolian archery, boxing, traditional folk dance, chess, folk painting, and the horse-headed fiddle. The implementation of this ethnic curriculum is normally carried out as extra-curricular activity, clubs, and societies, after 4pm.

Overall, ethnic Mongolian-style elements are strongly embodied in the curriculum, and all the teachers are organized and prepared for the school-based curriculum.

c) Use of Resources

The local government had invested a total of 7.5 million RMB in the year 2009 to the sample school, which improved the teaching and learning conditions significantly. Among all the financial aid, 500,000 RMB was used to reconstruct students’ dormitory buildings, 300,000 RMB was used to improve the Mongolian features of the school, 200,000 RMB was used to change the bed sheets for the students, and over 100,000 RMB was used to buy new chairs and desks for the students.

There are buildings for teaching, for laboratories, and students’ dormitories. A comprehensive building is divided into the computer room, library, language practicing room, a various activities room, and a Mongolian cultural exhibition room. There are over 20 Mongolian horse-headed fiddles for students to practice on in the cultural exhibition room. The school has also set up an Internet connection for students to try distance and online education. Each administrative office is equipped with desktop computers, and faculties have laptops installed with multimedia software that they use to teach. In essence, the school has embraced modernization and implemented a more technological way of management.

“Our school’s hardware is not bad, no need to add anything. The other aspects are ok too. For

example, the point and read machine is very advanced right? You point at one place and it will read the correspondent text on the book. This is much more convenient than tape recorder player. And only our school has white board. This is maybe a project of IMAR; Han school has white board too. And the multi-media classroom, the kind of board that comes down from blackboard is only available in our school. There are only 1-2 multi-media classrooms in the other schools. But each classroom in our school has it. Maybe it is paid by minority fiscal support. The plastic playground is very beautiful isn't it? Only our school has it, the other schools' playground is either soil or concrete."

--English teacher 2

In terms of instructional resources, both Chinese and English textbooks are bilingual, with Mongolian translations. The Mongolian content of the textbooks is written and published by the IMAR Educational Bureau, while Mongolian books are also written with workbooks in Mongolian. The content of the book is closely related to the environment of IMAR: the herdsmen at the mountains, descriptions of the seasons and the natural scenery, the deserts, and even articles that are drawn from Mongolian historical books, such as "The Secret History of Mongol". Aside from this, textbooks also appear to have strong nomadic characteristics: Mongolian yurt building architecture and its functions, traditional Mongolian cuisine, and features of natural Mongolian elements.

The basic educational textbooks for the other subjects are a series of books published by the IMAR Educational Publishing office. The first edition of the book was published in 2004, when teaching Mongolian was compulsory for primary students. The content of these books are closely related to minority primary students' everyday life and its socio-economic features: from Mongolian folk tales and children's stories to the biographies of famous international celebrities from a diverse range of backgrounds.

"Chinese textbook for Mongolian minority students is not same as Han students'. Han students' [students from the other Han Chinese schools] P4 textbook content is equal to P6 textbook content for Mongolian students. There is a big gap between them."

--Chinese teacher 2

The textbook has corresponding reading, teachers' guidebooks, workbooks, and speaking, learning, and vocational homework to assist students to gain a comprehensive and solid understanding of what they learn. Chinese textbooks are standard textbooks, written, edited, and published by the IMAR Educational Publishing office. These are written bilingually in Chinese and Mongolian, while English textbooks are written in English and Chinese.

“The textbook content for Mongolian is very closely related with our local pastoral countryside living context. Such as *Hulunbuir [a region that is governed as a prefecture-level city on northeastern IMAR]* grassland, many lessons about Mongolian life, cuisine, traditions, etc. Han students learn this kind of content too in their language class. But not all the content is about Mongolian lifestyle and culture, there is also literature forms such as poem, Chinese ancient poems, essays, etc. But the depth is not as deep as Han students [students from the other Han Chinese schools]. Some texts are shorter compared with Han students' learning content. The editor choose some part of the article from Han book or sometimes they need to remove some articles from Han book and add some Mongolian characteristic articles in order to make it suitable for Mongolian students to learn. Level P6 for Mongolian equals to Level P4 of Han students.”

--Chinese teacher 1

In terms of English teaching resources, there are English textbooks that are nationally standardized with a new curriculum, edited and published by the *RenMin JiaoYu Chubanshe* (People's Education Press), and by facilitators for the English language from Beijing. The facilitating process is a cooperative project between the government and the Normal University of Beijing to facilitate English teaching in the schools. Teachers and students' feedback shows that these textbooks are much more interesting and up to date with the digital age; they make the English language more fun to learn, and nurtures students' learning interests better.

“There is textbook for P1 English. It is called Pan Deng English. Beijing Normal University Press publishes the textbook. It is a cooperative project between the press company and our town government. From this year on, all the P1 use this English textbook in our city. Students do not need to pay for it, educational bureau said school does not need to pay, only provide teaching resources is enough. We did not have textbook in the past for P1. So we prepare classes by ourselves, teach a little bit of English conversation, a little bit of vocabulary, no

obligation, no aims. We were just trying to set a ground for English learning. So P1 and P2 English teacher has autonomous rights on their teaching materials. [For teaching/using the text books.] ”

--English teacher 2

Having an English learning textbook for primary 1 and 2 has helped English teachers in decreasing their workload. In the past there was no textbook for English or Chinese for the two grades, and yet the school required English teachers to find material on their own to teach, in order to set the base for when the language would be officially introduced in P3. Now, with the help of this joint project, the school finally has access to the latest, most interesting teaching resources, subsequently enhancing students’ interest and improving their English significantly.

“Pan Deng English [a book offered by Beijing Normal University in a joint project with the local government] is pretty good. Every day we show them cartoon short films. It is all videos, aims to nurture interests in learning English. We started using the textbook this year for P1 and P2.”

---English teacher 1

The table 5.3.3 is students’ views on the education arrangement in their schools. Questions such as whether more minority teachers should be hired because they know minority students’ needs better than Chinese teachers, and whether a different syllabus should be designed for minority students because the learning abilities differ between minority and Chinese students, are listed.

Table 5.3.3 indicates that item 1 received highest score (4.72), suggesting that students hold the view that minority education should be promoted more seriously in their schools. Item 6 and 3 are second and third respectively with scores 4.68 and 4.53, which indicates that students think more equipment, such as computers and language labs, should be provided for their school, and English language teaching and learning should be improved in their school.

The students giving a minimum score of 1.43 and 2.33 to item 10 and 8 respectively

reflects that minority students have great confidence to learn English as well as Han students, and believe that English should remain in the curriculum, like Han students. Not only so, the Mongolian minority students believe that the same English standards should be applied to Mongolian students, and there should not be any difference when designing and setting standards for Mongolian students.

Table 5.3.3

Students' view on education arrangement

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in this school.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.72	.628
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in this school.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.11	.792
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in this school.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.53	.785
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by this school because they know minority pupils' needs better.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.18	1.215
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.	P3-6	120	1	5	2.49	1.342
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for this school.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.68	.764
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	P3-6	120	1	5	2.90	1.641
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, Because their learning abilities differ.	P3-6	120	1	5	2.33	1.283
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.	P3-6	120	1	5	4.40	.995
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.	P3-6	120	1	5	1.43	1.010

Table 5.3.3 confirms the interviews with teachers' view on minority language education and English education are confirming with teachers' questionnaire results which will be found in section 4 of this chapter.

d) Staff Profile

As mentioned previously, the sample school is a merging of several schools that were all located in a different countryside of the town. When the school was first founded in 1974, there weren't a lot of staff members. However, when the schools merged under national policy and became one Mongolian nationality primary school, they had a total of 576 staff registered formally. Amongst these, 91 are teaching faculties, and all of them are Mongolian. Over 90% of the teachers are bachelor degree holders, and some have over 20 years of teaching experience. The backgrounds of the teachers that have been interviewed, and whose lessons I have observed, are mentioned in detail in Chapter 2.

These teachers strive towards learning new teaching concepts and the latest teaching methods, to effectively implement them into their teaching. The managing staff of the school also try and implement new effective techniques of top-down management. Other than teachers who have had years of experience, there are also teachers who have only been working for a year.

Each year, many teachers are given the opportunity to participate in different teaching competitions in IMAR, or in the whole of China, and some of them have received very good results. Other forms of teacher development include knowledge transformation projects, as short-term training programs, with teachers from other areas in IMAR or China. English teachers have also expressed their wish to attend short-term training programs in western countries. They value chances to be trained; however the cost is too high for their income level, and hence they have expressed hopes of the government offering to fund such trips in order to further develop their teaching abilities.

“I hope government and education bureau would offer more opportunities to English teachers to study abroad. This is meaningful. That kind of experience will open our eyes and even our perception will be changed. English teacher should go to the UK or US to have a look at how they are teaching their students; this will be helpful to us. We need to know the latest teaching

methods, new teaching concepts [because] these opportunities are quite necessary. It is ok for us to share some of the cost, but not too much because we would not be able to afford it. For example, if you ask me to pay 15,000 to 20,000 RMB for this kind of study, we can't (afford it), it is my half-year's salary (laugh). We can learn a lot of things if we go out, we will come back and share it with our students, if we do not go out, our horizon is limited, we won't know more, what shall we teach our students?

--English teacher 1

The table 5.3.4 shows teachers' views on language and education implemented in their school.

Table 5.3.4

Teachers' views on language and education

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well.	11	1	5	5.00	.000
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subjects.	11	1	5	1.55	.522
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils.	11	1	5	2.36	1.433
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages.	11	1	5	1.55	.522
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly.	11	1	5	1.00	.000
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese.	11	1	5	1.09	.302
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the New English Standard.	11	1	5	3.36	1.433
8. The language used to teach and learn English, inter-language, should be the minority language, but not Chinese Mandarin.	11	1	5	3.73	.786
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, without bothering to learn the minority language.	11	1	5	1.09	.302
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is, first of all, to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects, including Chinese and English equally well.	11	1	5	4.91	.302

Students' questionnaire results (table 5.3.4) is coherent with the teachers'; students and teachers both indicate that more minority English teachers should be hired because they can understand the students' needs better than Chinese English teachers. English teachers in this school also believe that having more opportunities to learn latest western teaching concepts and methods will foster Mongolian students' English learning, as they do believe Mongolian students have the same competence to learn English well. This is clearly shown in the questionnaire data in the table 5.3.4.

With reference to the teachers' view on languages and language education (table 5.3.4), item 1 (5.00) and 10 (4.91) were evaluated to receive the first and second highest mean scores respectively, and item 8 (3.73) was ranked third. Item 9 and 10 have contradictory statements, as item 9 favors the same syllabus with the Han and ignores the minority language while item 10 considers the importance of the minority language. We can see that the two voices of the pros and cons are the same, as both their standard deviation is .302.

Teachers assigned the lowest score 1.00 to item 5, proving that the statement saying minority students have intellectually lower ability to learn languages compared with Chinese students is not true. This is followed by the score of 1.09 on item 6 and 9, which indicates that minority students must treasure their mother language and also they have ability to learn three languages while using same syllabus as Chinese students. The other entire statement item 2 and 4 scored lower than 2.36, indicating that teachers value Mongolian culture and Mongolian language in their teaching, and, based on the mother language, Mongolian students have the ability to learn Chinese and English as well as Han students.

5.4 Implementation

In this section, I will analyze teacher-student communication and interaction patterns, as well as the content of teacher-student conversations. The focus will mainly be on teaching patterns, questioning patterns, the teacher's planning and implementation of

pedagogy, subject matters, and the medium of instruction on the whole.

5.4.1 Teaching and Learning

When learning the Mongolian language during class, there were several occasions when teachers would give examples that were closely related to Mongolian culture, geography, and history. The teaching content and the classroom discourse use examples from Mongolian history, a variety of geographical knowledge, moral education, Mongolian prayers, folk stories, songs and lyrics, and Mongolian traditions and values. There are also some questions asked in Mongolian class by teachers about unknown information, and the logical relationship between new knowledge and knowledge that has already been learnt.

Among the several Mongolian language classes that I observed, there was one particular class that appeared to be very interesting. It featured a traditional Mongolian role-play game. Lesson discourse shows how the class is a combination of entertainment, education, Mongolian traditions, and the inherited war spirit of Mongolians that comes with the ecological status of IMAR. The students reacted by being inquisitive and engaged. The plot quickly draws students' attention to focus on what the lesson's teaching target is: understanding the jungle law, and cherishing the environment and the land they live on. Other than its grammatical focus, this class also further challenged students' ecological protection awareness, and drew them closer to the current situation of the region via the entertaining conversation in the form of this traditional role-play game.

In terms of the subject matter, the Mongolian class teacher also shared many ancient proverbs with the students, with a variety of interesting metaphors that is characterized by Mongolian culture and related to nature and the nomadic lifestyle.

Vocabulary in the language is not merely restricted to everyday-vocab, but rather using lexis that is concerned with ancient war wisdom, traditional folk tales,

Mongolian philosophy, human-based education, and ecology and environmental protection awareness, for classes as young as primary 2. And still the students have no difficulty in understanding the subject matter.

“Mongolian vocabulary is over 2 million [words]. The root of this culture is grassland and the rural ground. Many vocabulary, proverbs, fables, idioms, allusions, folk stories are prairie lifestyle, such as the law of nature and importance of keeping a balance ecology. The grassland is Mongolian, Mongolian language and people are rooted in the grassland. Once the natural environment that carries the rich tradition, knowledge and ecology of Mongolian culture slowly fade down, Mongolian culture would heavily be threatened. The well-being of grassland is the well-being of Mongolian.”

---Mongolian teacher 1

Lesson observations indicate that during Mongolian, Chinese, and English classes, the implementation in class is strongly Mongolian-oriented, usually carried out using Mongolian as the medium of instruction. The classroom has strong ethnic Mongolian characteristics, and the interaction between teachers and students is mostly in Mongolian.

5.4.2 Language of Instruction

There are no problems for students when teachers code switch (change their medium of instruction) between Mongolian and Chinese, and Mongolian and English. Sometimes students themselves code switch between Mongolian and Chinese, Mongolian and English, and Chinese and English. The process of code switching is smooth and natural.

Teachers ask students questions for the purpose of eliciting new vocabulary. During English class, student-talk is restricted by teachers and by the content of their textbooks. None of the questions raised by students during English class is asked with the intention of learning something new.

Since English lessons only revolve around reading out loud rather than developing ideas or forming opinions, as is done during Mongolian class, no significant comparison can be made since there were no group discussions or subject knowledge discussions in the class.

Another feature the 8 observed classes (4 Mongolian, 2 Chinese, and 2 English) have in common is that through all the classroom discourse, it is shown that instruction in classrooms is teacher-centered. Only one teacher out of the eight teachers tried to shift the dynamics from it being teacher-centered to student-centered. The English class is highly textbook-oriented; on the other hand, Chinese classes are somehow less textbook-oriented, but nonetheless still obviously content-oriented.

Question-interaction patterns in the Mongolian, English, and Chinese classes in IMAR share the features mentioned above. Information and evidence from the lesson discourse analysis also show there is significant difference between the medium of instruction and teacher activities in minority classrooms in the town school and the city school.

English and Chinese are both found to be text-dependent, formal, and of didactic functions, while Mongolian is found to be text-independent, informal, and of explanatory functions. It indicates that school education emphasizes on deepening Mongolian knowledge first. Based on the general knowledge they learn through Mongolian, they develop competence in English and Chinese without it costing their mother tongue. In other words, the Mongolian language serves as an absolutely solid backbone in their study, and, along with the strong ethnic vitality in the school, it is clear that this school implements a strong accretive model.

5.4.3 Interaction between Teachers and Students

The analysis of the English classroom discourse shows that the teacher was talking for approximately 80% of the time, mainly giving classroom instructions. Out of a total of 82 questions, the teacher initiated 80 and the students asked only 2. The

Mongolian classroom also had the teacher talking for over 80% of the time. Out of a total of 43 questions, the teacher initiated 34 and the students raised 9. However, compared to the questions raised in the English class, during Mongolian class the students used more complicated lexical terms. All students' questions in English class were one-worded or short sentences, such as "Can I have a try?", while students in Mongolian class used short phrases and vocabulary that is beyond general primary 2 vocab.

As this class is delivered in Mongolian and students are able to talk in their mother-tongue, their participation is much higher compared to during Chinese classes, and the content of their conversations is more creative, even humorous. However, in reference to the purpose of the class, we can still see the tendency of the teacher to occupy most of the speaking time.

In this case, where English is a third language for the students, their participation in the lesson is obviously highly restricted. This is also a result of the teacher's attempt to control the class in the third language, while facing emotional and cognitive restriction of using the language as a medium of instruction. This is consistent with what the scholars, for example Pennington, find (1995a); that English classes are comparatively much more active than Chinese classes. This is also coherent with what teachers have said in their interviews – that the students show more interest in learning English compared to any other language.

During English class, the teacher tries to encourage students to answer by repeating the questions and key words. Questions are simpler, in a vernacular form of communication that may be more effective in eliciting a response, as opposed to a question posed using institutional structure and language. It may, at the same time, encourage students to respond in a way which breaks the silence in the lesson. In a particular lesson that I observed, the teacher tried to teach students "how many". The way she taught involved the repetition of "how many". Meanwhile she points at the blackboard, where there are farm animals drawn by the students themselves, and translates the question in Mongolian, then English once again. When the students

translate the phrase in Chinese, the teacher confirms it once again. In the end, the teacher emphasizes that they need to remember this phrase in English and explain the meaning in Mongolian. The communication pattern, especially the questioning patterns generated, was predominantly a teacher-centered question-answer-feedback interaction, during which knowledge was displayed and evaluated.

In both classes, over 80% of the talking was done by teachers (83% in Mongolian class, and 81% in English class, approximately); while in Chinese class there were no questions from students. Teachers asked 100% of the initiating questions. The English and Chinese teachers both have controlled the classroom discourse completely. In Chinese class, 89% of the teacher's questions are "genuine" questions for asking unknown information.

The discourse analysis from lesson recordings indicate that the Mongolian subjects benefit the most from the curriculum design and the implementation process in the school. The time allocation of the curriculum and the daily usage percentage of the three languages all reflect that Mongolian is the dominant language in the curriculum. However, the developing tendency of the curriculum shows that Mongolian is slowly giving in to Chinese.

The amount of time that students are exposed to the Mongolian language is the longest compared to the other two languages, but the teaching discourse of the Mongolian subjects appear to be the most complex and in favor of grammar and linguistic development. Even though Chinese and English has drawn in the students' interest the most, they still remain at the stage of everyday-communication learning. Mongolian as the MOI assists the learning of these two languages.

5.5 Outcomes

As with the previous case study chapter, in the following section, I will discuss formal and informal assessment results of the school, look at short term learning

performance of students in terms of students' learning outcomes, and students' perception of trilingual education in their school.

In formal assessments, such as within the school, within the town, and within the city, the school has shown remarkable results. In Mongolian subjects particularly, the students have always secured first place in the exams. In other subjects that are also taught in Mongolian, such as Nature, Art, Music, and Mongolian writing, students' testing results also ranked first. Their performance in Chinese and English are not as good as the Han students in town, or in the city in general. But certain students had very good performance levels in English – better than the Han students – specifically in English speaking. In informal assessments, such as competitions in Mongolian storytelling, artistic writing competitions, speech giving and reading, and Mongolian boxing competition in sports, students in this school all acquired very good results in the culture-related competitions.

The school performs outstandingly in fostering Mongolian teaching, helping students gain strong knowledge in Mongolian traditions of culture, art, and literature. Their main achievements include: teaching students using different types of articles and bodies of literature, helping students to form comprehensive reading and writing skills, and exposing students to literature from another culture. Other achievements also include learning Mongolian vocabulary, form the ability to read Mongolian books, ability to think critically, and to explain or describe a situation, or narrate an event in Mongolian. Students make sentences, write essays, or perform on the stage; this is all characterized with strong Mongolian geographical and pastoral language, as well as ethnic characteristics.

The Chinese subject mainly focuses on identifying *Pinyin*, enlarging Chinese vocabulary, and learning basic linguistic grammar, such as metaphors, similes, antonyms, sentence structure, and verbs. Students are also taught how to make sentences, and do comprehensive reading to understand and summarize the main ideas of an article. The aim for students when learning Chinese is to form the ability to write by looking at pictures, as well as the ability to write short critical articles.

Chinese teachers have met barriers in teaching students Chinese, but there are some positive factors that have emerged with some social change too. Some teachers have given comments about their students' Chinese ability:

“Nowadays, Mongolian students start to learn Chinese Pin Yin from pre-school, compared with the past it is much easier to teach them now. But students are still too young, so there are difficulties to teach them from P2. Sometimes we use Mongolian to explain to them. Their speaking is much better than writing. They also do not recheck after writing.”

--Chinese teacher 3

“Chinese subject exam result is not as good at the schools' in city. But the gap is not huge.”

--Chinese teacher 3

“Mongolian students' Chinese is not as fluent as Han students. Their Chinese competence is restricted. “

--English teacher 2

“If they [Mongolian students] were all living in countryside, who would speak Chinese? We are at the same [situation], after we go back to our home countryside and start speaking Mongolian for a while, once we come back to school to start giving Chinese lessons, we would get confused (Chinese and Mongolian) a little bit. After we spend some time here in town, once we go back to countryside, we get confused when we speak Mongolian. Environment plays an important role in learning language. Now, learning Chinese is relatively easier for students, and in contrast, learning Mongolian has become difficult.”

--Chinese teacher 2

English has been included into the total score of secondary school entrance examinations since 2012. Until then, English was not even a tested subject, and was taken as seriously as the other two languages. Students have shown greater interest and great potential to achieve higher competence in English.

“Students are more interested in learning English than learning the other subjects. Plus it is simple, if student memorize textbook articles and some vocabularies, they can get quite high scores.”

--English teacher 2

Some teachers even believe that Mongolian students can learn English better than Han students, while studying under the Mongolian education system. When asked how that is possible, the teacher answered:

“English exam result is almost as good as Chinese students in this town, not better than them, but not lower than their results either. We have not compared our results with schools in the city or the other places in IMAR. But we only started to emphasize English learning since the past two years. Now the tendency is that we are getting better than Chinese students in English, Maybe in the future we would be better than the other schools in IMAR.”

--English teacher

5.5.1 Town School Students’ Perspectives on Trilingual Education

Table 5.5.1 is about a questionnaire to assess students’ perceptions and feelings towards their experience in the trilingual model that they have at their school. Questions such whether they like the trilingual model that is implemented in their school or not, and whether they feel their Mongolian, Chinese, or English can reach a very proficient level or not when they graduate from the school, have been asked to the students to know their satisfaction levels concerning their school’s trilingual model and their attitude towards it. The actual questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

Overall, students are satisfied with the trilingual teaching model in IMAR. Overall rating is 4.30 for item 2.

The highest score is item 13 with a score of 4.85, indicating that Mongolian students tend to be very satisfied with their progress in spoken Mongolian. The second highest score is item 4 – students believe it is comfortable to use English as the MOI when learning English. This number is followed by 4.76 of item 18, indicating that they are confident that their spoken Mongolian can achieve a good proficiency when they graduate from the school.

When it is proposed to teach physical education in English, so that students can have more chances to be exposed to an English environment, the students tended to not agree with this proposal, and rated the lowest score in the survey – only 2.29. When looking into the future, students seem uncertain about whether their English writing skills will be competent or not, as they only rated this proposition 3.37. On the other hand, although Chinese is a foreign language to them, they have rated it significantly higher than English writing; 4.43 is the score for Chinese writing.

Students' Chinese speaking and writing ability in the city is better than at the town and town levels. This is related to the fact that teachers' input for English and Chinese subjects is mainly in Chinese, as opposed to using English and Mongolian, as done in the town and town level schools. In terms of demography, the city is also an over 70% Chinese environment, which is another factor that must be taken into account.

Survey and interview results show that 90% of parents and teachers believe that Chinese will be the most commonly used language for them once they enter society. Another students' survey result on perceptions of trilingual education show that Mongolian students themselves have rated their Chinese speaking ability quite high, and they feel confident about their writing skills after graduating from primary school. On the other hand, their teachers have clearly expressed that there are significant gaps between Mongolian and Chinese students in terms of their Chinese ability, especially in reading and writing. The gaps are shown in terms of richness in vocabulary, arrangement of content, and depth of understanding.

The data shows that the model implemented in the school aims to nurture Mongolian students with strong trilingual competence. But teachers' interviews, exam outcomes, and students and teachers' questionnaires reflect that the outcomes are not balanced in the end. The learning outcomes of students leans towards Mongolian at quite a comprehensive level, and yet Chinese will reach fluency in communication but will remain relatively poor in comprehensive reading and writing. English is only restricted to daily communication and surface-level translation.

Table 5.5.1

Town School Students' Perceptions on Trilingual Education Model

	Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I find it appropriate to start using Chinese as MOI in Chinese lessons in G2.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.72	.676
2	I enjoy the trilingual education model implemented in the school.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.60	1.019
3	I feel comfortable switching from one language to another when studying different subjects in the school.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.76	1.494
4	I feel comfortable studying the English subject using English as the MOI.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.82	.709
5	I feel comfortable studying the Chinese subject using Chinese as the MOI.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.67	.702
6	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.57	.971
7	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study of the Chinese subject.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.99	1.429
8	I find co-switching in different subjects useful for my language development in general.	G3-6	91	1	5	2.33	1.397
9	I am happy with my progress in the study of written English.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.66	1.131
10	I am happy with my progress in the study of written Chinese	G3-6	91	1	5	3.71	.960
11	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.48	.910
12	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.84	.844
13	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Mongolian.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.85	.547
14	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.52	.565
15	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.67	.749
16	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.37	.565
17	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Chinese.	G3-6	91	1	5	3.56	.820
18	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Mongolian.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.76	.532
19	I would like to have P.E and Art to be taught in English.	G3-6	91	1	5	4.47	.699

The efficiency of this model is debatable. But the effort that the school puts in to retain strong ethnic Mongolian identity and culture is remarkable. It is also clear that the school is a Model 1 type school. I have illustrated through several points in the previous sections, from ethno-linguistic vitality, school curriculum design, human

resources distribution, and curriculum application aspects, that this is the case.

5.5.2 Assessment

The *Baotou* Education Bureau has a special educational research office that is in charge of the testing and evaluation of Mongolian students and the teachers' work. The outcome of students in terms of Mongolian is allocated in four aspects of language learning: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In order to get into Mongolian middle schools, students are required to take exams issued by the Autonomous Region Educational Bureau in Hohhot. According to the faculties in the school, most of the exam material is translated either from Chinese workbooks or exams resources on websites or in local bookstores. All the students are tested through formal exams and informal tests. Formal exams include monthly school examinations and tests that are conducted two times each year at the end of each semester by the educational bureau in the Baotou city.

Informal exams include teachers' observation of students' behavior in their classes, how active they are, how is their performance in finishing homework, participating in group activities, and the work and duties that are given to them by teachers. Another informal assessment criteria includes some students' performances in provincial competitions, such as primary students' writing competition in Mongolian, performances in annual activities at school, performances in sports events, and national musical, dance or art competitions.

Compared with the city school, this town school is not as resourceful. While the city school can collect exams within all the regions and cities in IMAR to practice, this school has its own assessing system and materials, which is mostly translated or collected by teachers in the school or through one or two workbooks from their joint program sponsors. It is also found that students in this school have less homework load compared with city school students.

While students are being assessed, the local government, local TV, visitors from universities in Hohhot, or even scholars from Hong Kong or Britain constantly visit the school and its teachers. This school implements a very strong accretive model, which contributes significantly to the maintenance of the Mongolian language and culture, while students' performance in Chinese and English can also achieve a good level. This unique characteristic and situation of this school attracts much attention from the outside world. The school has also received dozens of awards in terms of building a minority school, and has been rewarded as the flagship school for minority education.

5.6 Sustainability

To implement trilingual education for minority students, regardless of their initial primary education, is to initially expose them to a diverse culture and society. The function of minority education in primary school is that of a social glue, to prepare them for high competition in society.

By mastering different languages, Mongolian students are able to recognize their own ethnic identity, but, nonetheless, they must also clearly recognize that social competition exists not only in their native language, but also in the national language and in a global setting. There is a need for them to reach a certain standard in two foreign languages, and to some extent even achieve higher standards in languages that are not their mother tongue. When they enter society, this trend will be an inevitable and practical reality for them. Hence, even though some Mongolian pupils have been exposed to Mongolian education from primary level to higher education level, from a long-term perspective, the Chinese will still assimilate them.

Mongolian remains a marginalized minority language, and it will continue to be marginalized. The pace of marginalization nowadays is faster than any other period in history. From primary school onwards, students are subtly educated to accept this reality, and step-by-step move closer to assimilation. Minority language education

policy, the names of schools, their hardware, and even the decoration may look very beautiful on the surface. But if we dig deep, beneath all this beauty, there is the assimilation process of the majority. Mongolian, in the process of education, will continue to be weakened, and at the same time the importance of Chinese and English will be strengthened.

One important factor influencing the sustainability of the Mongolian language is the local policy of banning the nomads in the countryside. The government has taken away the land from the local nomads, in the name of “protecting the environment”. They have built an immigrant district for the nomads, forcing them to leave their hometown.

“Nowadays, if we want to see something about Mongolian culture or history, we have to go to the museum. How many students in our school have seen camel? Camel has almost disappeared. There were so many wild camels, cows, sheep, and horses on the savanna in the past, when I was young, I used to ride horse, watch sheep and take care of various animals for my family. But now government has built immigration area and country side is banned from people to live there.”

--Chinese teacher 2

Some policies have already made Mongolians leave their homeland. While many Mongolian students are living in town, the chances for them to experience and witness Mongolian traditional habitudes, such as worshipping the *Obboo*, worshipping *Shangshen Mod* (old willow tree), and worshipping *Tengir* (God) have been slim to none. All these customs are the soul and heart of Mongolian philosophy and values, and, yet, Mongolian students cannot experience it. It is a big loss in Mongolian education. But some of the teachers show less concern with the status of Mongolian. They firmly believe that Mongolian will still be used among their community, and that this language will still have strong roots to survive through assimilation and globalization.

“Mongolian will not be lost, they have learnt it from primary school, and they can speak Mongolian, although they might not write in Mongolian, but they will speak the language. English does not have environment. In the future English will not be used.”

--English teacher 2

“Based on my observation, the Mongolian language is not going to be extinct that fast. But yes, Chinese has become the most widely used language even to the world. I assume that in the future the global language will be Chinese. But if each and every Mongolian really dedicates to keep our culture alive, give strength to protect our language and culture, Mongolian will not to be extinct.”

--Mongolian teacher 1

If we look at the Chinese teaching syllabus, for example, we can see that the learning content for Mongolian students in grade 4 is same as the content for Chinese students in grade 2. The gap is even more obvious when we compare syllabus design and assessment requirements. But none of these factors can change the fact that Mongolian students will have to compete with Chinese students in Chinese once they enter mainstream society. Society will not lower the threshold for minority students.

Mongolian itself is one of the most complicated language systems in the world. Based on mastering this language while adding 2 foreign languages on top of it is a challenging, complicated cognitive and linguistic process. How to achieve high proficiency in 3 languages while at the same time maintaining the core values and the identity of the Mongolian is a question that many stakeholders and scholars are trying to answer.

“My husband works in Han organization, at the time when we decided to send our kid to Han school was to expect nothing else than having him forming a good writing skill. I am a [Chinese] teacher, but nonetheless, I still feel difficult when it comes to write something.”

--Chinese teacher 3

If we look at tertiary and secondary level perceptions and attitudes of the students, the teachers and parents are the ones who influence the sustainability of the Mongolian language. The environment that the school is creating for trilingual education is also a strong factor that will impact sustainability. As I have described in the ethno-linguistic and school context section, the school’s situation, the classroom decoration, and the overall atmosphere of this school is a very strongly

Mongolian-centered and Mongolian-culture dominant environment. The message is sent out clearly that Mongolian tradition and heritage is valued in the school, and it is the responsibility of the students to sustain it.

“Even if students get a good job, the chances of them using English in the future are very slim. The chances of them to be English teachers are not big either. See? If they come back to their hometown to work, they won’t use English.”

--English teacher 2

Trilingual Mongolian students should be proud of their background, be academically well developed, and have the ability to spread knowledge of Mongolian culture, tradition, history, and values in Chinese and English. The people who will sustain the language are the kind whom education will help to build up – someone with the ability to work in higher social occupations, such as lawyers, doctors, architects, and professors, who will be proud of being Mongolian. The aim of this education is not only to have students gain strong language skills; the most important thing is that after receiving multilingual education, students will try and enter mainstream society to compete with the majority, enter the social competition, get a decent job, and at the same time secure their language and be proud of being Mongolian.

Findings from the interviews and observations indicate that the Chinese language has the strongest sustainability and ethno-linguistic vitality. Some teachers expressed a coherent view with me in their interviews:

“The most important language in the future will be Chinese in society. Mongolian will basically not be widely used in society, unless one do some work closely related with Mongolian culture or Mongolia. If the work is not related with Mongolian, then they would still use Chinese. All the documents are in Chinese, SMS is in Chinese, when we have meeting in the school, and we also use Chinese. English may be forgotten in the future if their work is not translation, or work in abroad or teacher.”

--Chinese teacher 2

Mongolian, on the other hand, will be used often between minority family members and peers. It is their mother language, and will be the main communicative language

for the Mongolian minority. There is also a strong influence from the Mongolian Republic that is affecting a certain amount of the economy, culture, and industry in IMAR; therefore Mongolians will still have quite a strong ethno-linguistic vitality in IMAR, although just not as strong as Chinese.

5.7 Discussion

This town school implements the accretive trilingual model with the following features: the school has strong Mongolian ethno-linguistic vitality, and uses Mongolian as the main and dominant medium of instruction in teaching and learning. The school has outstanding performance in maintaining strong Mongolian culture, and students are greatly exposed to Mongolian traditional music training, dancing, poetry, prayers, and other cultural activities.

The school's goal is to educate their students to achieve additive trilingualism. Results of the study show that students gain relatively good proficiency in Mongolian, Chinese, and primary knowledge in English by the end of their primary education. Their mother language is not lost during the learning progress. Within 6 years of instruction in Mongolian, students develop a relatively solid and ideal standard in Mongolian speaking, writing (comprehensive sentences or short paragraphs), and spelling. According to the interview, students' Mongolian test scores are the highest in Baotou city. Students in the school also usually participate in various writing and storytelling competitions, and get very good scores.

“Mongolian is probably securing first place in exam result in this city. Most of the time this school's Mongolian is better than the other two schools in the city. It is because this school has a Mongolian environment [to use Mongolian]. Another factor is that our school really emphasizes sustaining Mongolian culture and focus on improving minority education.”

--Chinese teacher 2

The level of Chinese in this school shows that within a year of instruction, a year of formal Chinese education from grade 2, students can develop basic Chinese skills in

communication, vocabulary, basic grammar, reading comprehension, and writing articles in standard tests. This is not at the cost of their Mongolian skills. However, some teachers and students have expressed moving the transition time from grade 2 to grade 3; there is some confusion between the Chinese alphabet and English letters.

“I think it is too early to introduce English and Chinese to the curriculum. Mongolian is a complicated language with many letters. The grammar is complicated too. When students can hardly spell Mongolian words, Chinese is introduced to the curriculum. And students get confused with the pronunciation of Chinese alphabet and Mongolian alphabet. Not to mention when English is introduced to the curriculum, students need to identify pronunciation and grammar difference in 3 languages. It is causing big confusion and making students very frustrated. Mongolian as the first and mother language should be given time to be learnt solidly! I suggest postponing the time to learn Chinese and English. Chinese can be moved to P3 and English can be postponed to P6.”

--Mongolian teacher 1

Students' Chinese speaking and writing ability in the towns is not better than at city level. Even though the town has an 80% Chinese environment, most of the students speak Mongolian at home and most of them are from the countryside. One cannot ignore this fact that must be taken into account when deciding when to introduce Chinese to the curriculum. After all, Chinese is a foreign language for Mongolian students. Although – as it is described in the interview – some teachers think Mongolian students' Chinese ability is not as good as Chinese students, other teachers have also argued that the gap is not very significant.

“We have not compared the results with city schools. But there are 2 Mongolian schools in Baotou, and 1 here. Of course their Chinese is better than us, because they have the environment. But even if they are good, the gap is not that big.”

--Chinese teacher 2

“Compared to Chinese students, of course in terms of using languages, identifying similar vocabularies, we show weaknesses. And the logic when writing composition also shows that it is not as fluent as the Chinese students.”

--English teacher 2

As it was found and mentioned in the previous findings, teachers believe there are gaps between Chinese and Mongolian students in terms of their ability in writing and speaking in Chinese. Although students rated themselves quite high in Chinese, there are still many things to do in order to perfect their language to enter mainstream society and compete. In term of English, normally, students' performance in English standard tests do not differ from Chinese students, who have been immersed in the English language for 6 years. Some Mongolian students perform even better than Chinese students, in terms of pronunciation, grammar, and creative writing.

If we look at how the additive trilingual education curriculum is implemented in the school, we can see that it is consistent – from the curriculum design to the teaching-learning activities in the classroom to the outcomes of the students. Mongolian is the most taught subject in the school, and all the other subjects, apart from Chinese and English, are also taught in Mongolian. Mongolian is used as the only communicative language in the school, and taught as main subject from grade 1. Many schools from other cities, and scholars who are studying about minority education in IMAR, consider this school a model school on how to implement strong Mongolian ethnic education. Mongolian teachers, the head teachers, and the principals in the school have a high reputation in Mongolian ethnic minority education circles.

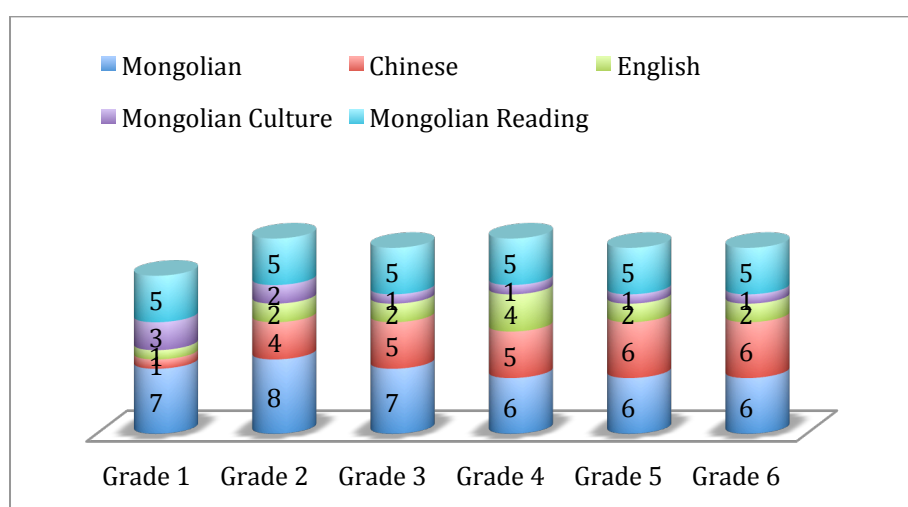


Figure 5.7.1 *Distribution of curriculum in the town school*

Figure 5.7.1 is a figure illustrating the distribution of the curriculum in the school: it depicts the length of time distributed to the three languages, which changes every school year, as well as the extra-curricular activities that are implemented in order to foster Mongolian culture further.

It is clear in the curriculum-changing patterns that Mongolian is the most important language, and is the base of all of the learning subjects. Mongolian culture and tradition is the core value and culture in the school. That is what the school has designed and implemented.

All of the teaching and learning activities are to help the students in gaining knowledge that is based on Mongolian culture and heritage. The school emphasizes on the importance of learning all three languages well; however, when it comes to implementation, Mongolian teaching holds the most importance and occupies the most time in the curriculum. Chinese and English are introduced to the curriculum much later than Mongolian.

The peak occurs at grade 4 for the English language, when Mongolian students have overcome obstacles in learning Chinese pinyin and can read in Mongolian. Hence the school arranges for more time spent learning the English language, based on mastering the other two languages first.

From the development pattern, it is easy to predict that the red figure shows the biggest tendency to expand, and to become more dominant in the curriculum. This means the length of students' exposure to the Chinese language progressively occupies more and more hours in the school curriculum. This matches with what is originally written in the minority education policy, and guarantees that minority students receive education in their mother language. However, if we look closely at the changing curriculum trend, it is not hard to see that the Mongolian language is giving into Chinese, even within the period of primary education.

Mongolian is clearly on a downward trend. From Grade 2 the decline had started, and Mongolian and Chinese are clearly opposing each other. The peak for the Mongolian language occurred in Grade 2, and it is characterized by Mongolian language syntax and grammar structure. Grade 2 is the time for Mongolian students to move from spelling and reading to recognize what they are reading. Many students meet obstacles in the reading, and therefore need more time to practice the Mongolian language.

The Chinese language will survive at the highest level out of the three languages. Given that the ethno-linguistic vitality outside of school is Han dominated, Mongolian has a relatively lower chance of survival compared to Chinese. The gap between the English language and its ethno-linguistic vitality shows that there are no sufficient resources for English to survive.

There are strong national policies that place Chinese as the national language, a must-learn subject, and strongly push its implementation. Chinese is also the mainstream social communication tool, and will be the most used language for the Mongolian minority once they enter society. English will be the least sustained language among the three languages. Although globalization has been widely affecting the social economy and environment, there are still not that many foreign organizations or companies in IMAR. Simply the lack of an English environment and need to use English will slowly lead to weaken the students' English abilities. The English language is only a tool for students to enter universities and obtain certificates. It will be a bonus, but not a must.

In order to achieve higher additive trilingualism results, the management of the school provides many chances for teacher training, knowledge transfer, and teacher development. Chinese and English teachers are given extra opportunities to visit schools within IMAR or even outside of IMAR.

From policy design to the delivering model, it takes cooperation among policy makers, principals, head teachers, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

The community also plays an important role in trilingual education. It is a rather comprehensive process at each stage, involving many roles and parts. The relationship between the delivery of the policy and designing of the policy shows that there are several factors that foster the implementation quite effectively. But there are several factors hindering it too. The factors that are sustaining Mongolian in this school are as follows:

At the primary level, the design of the policy is aimed to educate Mongolian students to gain clear linguistic, cultural, and social knowledge, and equip them with social political power. Ethnolinguistic environment, demographic diversity, and the economic development level is also referred to have huge impact on Mongolian sustainability in IMAR.

Geographically the countryside is a close border of Mongolia, so trading and frequent cultural and business cooperation has strengthened their bonds, and brought them closer to the Mongolian identity and Mongolian culture. The local government has given financial support to upgrade the hardware of the school, and to improve the overall environment of the school. The local community, especially the parents, also offers the school cooperative help to implement ethnic Mongolian extra curriculum classes. Whenever the school holds Mongolian tradition-related activities, local broadcasting stations broadcast it to the whole town – from the town to the countryside. These factors are sustaining Mongolian more efficiently. These features are in consistence with Feng and Adamson's (2008) findings in promoting a strong accretive model, which are local policy support, ethno-linguistic vitality, geographic advantages, and social economic factors.

Secondary factors that are affecting implementation of the models and language sustainability are complicated and various. These include: teacher resources, teaching materials, teacher training and development, local or provincial government policies change and fiscal support, teachers' attitude, and parents' social economic status. All can all affect the results. At secondary level, the management process, from the principal to the head teacher to subject teachers, emphasize on Mongolian education

and on using Mongolian as the medium of instruction.

The local policy that bans nomadic activity is a hindering factor, negatively impacting the Mongolian language's sustainability. Mongolians' roots of their language is the grassland; if they give that place to the mining industry to dig for mineral resources underground, they lose not only their homeland, but also their home language. A series of articles and policies issued by the government mention that minority education has the privilege over local Chinese educational institutions to receive fiscal aids and develop their education under the same circumstances. Minority education policy has granted the local schools more financial aid in terms of education compared to Chinese. But in reality, this is hardly the case. The national entrance examination policy has shown no benefits towards minority students. It is clearly shown in the lack of choices that Mongolian students have when they are choosing a university for themselves.

At tertiary level, factors include the school context, context of the classroom, display of different cultures, school condition, and the learning and teaching activities in the classroom. In the classroom, the learning and teaching activities are carried out step by step, enforcing basic language abilities in three languages. One important outcome is that the students will be very strong in Mongolian, and gain good competence in spoken Chinese and conversational English. A small amount of Mongolian students perform better in English tests than Han Chinese students, and their Chinese ability is good too. Along with the language competence, they also gain a strong ethnic minority identity and are very clear of their minority group's culture. The school has a very strong Mongolian linguistic environment and authentic Mongolian resources. While most of the teachers come from a nomadic countryside childhood and have a strong sense of Mongolian identity, many students are also from the countryside, and are more familiar with Mongolian lifestyle, culture, history, and everyday life.

“Our students’ resources are mostly from the pastoral countryside, their most used language is Mongolian, and most of them speak only Mongolian at home. So they face more difficulties than students in cities. Not like those in cities, who speak Chinese more often at home and

outside of school. But I would say the gap is not that big. It has nothing to do with teaching resources; it has to do with environment. City environment is more Chinese-oriented.”

--Chinese teacher 1

5.8 Conclusion

This school is a strong Model I accretive model school in trilingual education. The implementation of trilingual education, structure of the curriculum, student-learning outcomes, and school environment indicate that this school emphasizes strongly on nurturing students with a strong Mongolian identity. The Mongolian subject occupies the most teaching hours in the curriculum, along with Mongolian cultural extra-curricular activities in the curriculum. Students’ outcomes show that they have a strong Mongolian competence in terms of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Based on this, students in this school also introduce Chinese and English to the curriculum at different times. By the end of the school, students have a relatively high level of competence in these two languages without it costing their mother language. Students, in the end, gain a strong ethnic identity, feel confident about their education, and treasure their Mongolian language.

Additive trilingualism is achieved under a coherent system of design, delivery, assessment of outcomes, and sustainability of outcomes. Cooperation between principals, the managing leadership team, teachers, stakeholders, publishers, the educational bureau, officials, and even publishing companies in the society, and the local government is required. The time to introduce Chinese and English is still debatable, as is stated by some teachers in their interview. But teaching 3 languages at the same time without it costing the mother language already seems like a great achievement in this school.

It is clear that the curriculum data shows Mongolian slowly giving in to the Chinese curriculum, especially as students enter secondary school. English remains a major subject, but, due to the lack of ethno-linguistic vitality resources to sustain it, English will not be widely used and will only be restricted to examinations, not daily

communication. However, it is clear that Chinese in the end will become the most widely used language. This school is an island in the sea of Chinese schools.

Factors that are fostering the implementation are the national policy, local financial support, a strong and good group of teachers, the teaching conditions, parents' support, and teachers and students' attitudes and perceptions about Mongolian education and minority schools. There are also factors that are hindering the sustainability of the Mongolian language; for example the local policies toward nomadic activities. Methods of allocating financial aid between Chinese schools and Mongolian schools lack teacher development and knowledge transfer opportunities, and more financial aid is needed to support these activities. Other factors include local economic growth, local ethno-linguistic vitality which is Han dominant, and the lack of Mongolian teaching resources and practicing resources in the market. The development of teaching resources is also lacking: for example, multimedia products, movies, books, and TV channels on the Mongolian language and Mongolian culture.

Chapter 6

The Village School

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters are detailed analysis of two sample schools – a city and a town school. I will focus on a village-level school placed in a remote area in this chapter, where the nomadic lifestyle is prevalent and agriculture is the main industry. This village is on the border of IMAR with Liaoning Province, and hence, in terms of ethno-linguistic environment and economic growth, it is placed interestingly.

Similar to how I have presented the previous case schools, this school will also be examined from four dimensions: policy design, policy implementation, teaching outcome, and sustainability. At the end of this chapter, I will determine the key features of the school to conclude how it is a strong Model 1 school of the four models identified by Feng and Adamson, alongside deducing the challenges encountered when implementing trilingual educational policies. I will close the chapter with specific examples and methods that one can learn from this particular school in terms of sustaining the Mongolian language.

6.2 Huanghuatala Village Context

The demographics, economic growth, geographic location, and the ethno linguistic environment have an important impact on the implementation of trilingual education. These factors have been vital in choosing the *Huanghuatala* village school to study the status of the implementation of trilingualism.

Demographically, Mongolians occupy over 90% of the population in this area. Mongolians are the dominant ethnic group, and the language is the most widely used language in the government, culture interaction, business, and education. Because the

village is located at the IMAR-Liaoning Province border, there is a good platform to use Chinese more frequently when trading across borders, or co-operating in other ways. There is more demand here for using Chinese than other inland areas in IMAR.

Economically, this particular village is more developed than other villages in the area. Since the 1990s, this village has become the central area for weekly trade activities within the area. The village itself is located in a place where two provincial roads cross, and it is also close to a highway. On the other hand, this village is the biggest village out of 36 small villages under a town level government.

Geographically, this village is only 30km away from the central town of *Naiman*, and 50km from the entrance of *Liaoning* province. Demographically, this village has more Mongolians than Chinese; the Mongolian language is dominant in the community. However, due to quick business development and the effects of urbanization, Chinese is becoming increasingly important. Still, the combination of advantages and disadvantages for the Mongolian language in this area makes it worthwhile to study to what extent Mongolian is sustained, and what model of trilingualism is implemented here.

6.2.1 Demography

Table 6.2.1 shows the demography of *Huanghuatala* village. It is a place where the Chinese and Mongolians live together, but Mongolians occupy over 70% of the population.

Table 6.2.1

Ethnic groups in Huanghuatala, 2010 census.

Population	Ethnicity
All together 20,860	Chinese, Mongol
Mongolian 13,272	Mongol (73.6%)

The total population of this village, according to 2010 Census, is 20,860. There are two major ethnicities in Huanghuatala: the Mongolian ethnic minority and the Han Chinese. According to the 2010 Census (Statistics and Census Service, 2012), 73.6% of the population in Huanghuatala is Mongolian (Table 6.2.1).

Huanghuatala comprises of 45 small villages, and the population of this particular village is 20,860. The data in this table is very significant. It indicates that in terms of demographics, the village is a strong Mongolian-dominated society. This factor has a strong impact on the sustainability of the Mongolian language, and it is in strong favor of implementing Mongolian-centered trilingual education. The economic situation, however, tends to support the use of Chinese. The language is thriving due to the increasing amount of economic trade with other regions within China. There is also relatively little difference between the Mongolian majority and the Han minority in terms of the culture, lifestyle, cuisine, or values in the community. The differences between them are highly blurred. As for English, the area does not have the favorable elements to foster such a foreign language.

6.2.2 Economy

The important industries for this village include agriculture products, nomadic exchange between locals or animal traders from other provinces, and merchants' businesses. The annual income per person in this village is about 3,344 RMB. There is over 1,410,000 square meters of farmland in the area, which occupies $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total landscape of this village. The forest in this village is 2,200,000 square meters, and the grassland is 100,000 square meters. There is also a variety of nomadic animals, numbered over 100,000.

In terms of the transportation link, this village exists at a cross point where there are 4 province roads, and one highway across each other. These roads and the highway are

all major transportation lines that connect the trade and transportation within eastern IMAR and other provinces, like Liaoning province. It is also right next to two highways that cross two provinces. There is over 30km of a well-built road running through the village that connects this village to the other small villages. Because of the transportation benefit, the village has a big advantage, and has become a major trading area. Every Monday is the day of trade for the farmers and nomads, to do business with merchants from different provinces and downtown, who all gather in this village. This event has stimulated the use of Chinese in the village. But Mongolian is still the most used language.

There are 3 Mongolian schools in this area; one middle school, one primary school, and one pre-school. The Mongolian language is spread to such an extent that some of the Chinese citizens who live here can also speak and understand Mongolian.

6.2.3 Ethnolinguistic Environment

The sample school that I visited is a primary school that offers students primary education from grade 1 to 5. This school is located 200km southeast of *Tongliao* city, and is at the west side of the village next to a main road. Previously, the school was only a local village school that only accepted students from this particular village. In 2000, due to the policy of urbanization, 2 village schools were merged to create this primary school. Just as the last two case studies, the next section will look at the ethno-linguistic environment of this village.

a) Instrumental Function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

Mongolian is the main communicative language in the community and in the school. In the local media, this place not only has Chinese broadcasting stations but also Mongolian radio and local TV channels. Schools play a major role in conducting Mongolian culture activities annually, where teachers instruct students to participate

in activities and prepare different performances. The different types of performances cover many elements and aspects of Mongolian culture.

Street and commercial signs are bilingual in this village. The decoration at the central area is a mixture of Mongolian and Han cultures, with several Mongolian *Gers* and sculptures placed in the middle. The architecture style in this village, however, is almost void of any Mongolian influence. On the other hand, the language of business, or the commercial language, in this village is predominantly Mongolian, and people mostly communicate in Mongolian.

As with the other two areas of study, learning English here is also becoming increasingly popular. In all school contexts, English is a major learning subject. Teachers and parents agree that learning English has become an unavoidable trend; however, they also worry that because it is a school subject, students will learn it but cease to use it, and soon forget it once they complete their education.

b) Regulative Functions of Mongolian, Chinese and English

In this area, the government documents are issued bilingually; namely in Chinese and Mongolian. The local legal system and administration make use of both Mongolian and Chinese as well. However, in the courtrooms and meeting rooms, Chinese remains the dominant language. Communication between government officials and the documents they exchange are more in Chinese than Mongolian. Meanwhile, English is only used to teach English as a subject at school. There are no diplomatic connections or any affiliations with any international organizations in this area.

c) Interpersonal function of Mongolian, Chinese and English

In this village, Mongolian is used as a communicative tool for the local population to exchange information, trade amongst each other, or conduct official work. Chinese is

the bridge that connects this village to the outside world. Although some of the villagers are bilingual and fluent in speaking Chinese, one can notice their strong Mongolian accent. Many of the advertisements in the media are in Mongolian, while the television, radio, and telecom services are bilingual in Mongolian and Chinese. This situation somehow gives the Mongolians who reside here confidence about the future of the Mongolian language. As a teacher expressed in an interview:

Mongolian will not disappear, but this language is facing difficulties for sure. There are policies that supporting the teaching and using of Mongolian. There is also a considerable amount of people using Mongolian. Mongolian language also has its written form, speaking form, so it will not disappear.

--Mongolian teacher 1

This village is covered with broadcasting stations; national Chinese TV stations are available in the area for the citizens. If they are willing to pay extra, some English channels, such as HBO, BBC, Star TV, and Fox News can also be provided to them. CCTV 9, the mainland English TV channel, is available in the village too. But due to the poor socioeconomic situation and the lack of the use of English, no family actually subscribes to these channels. Other than TV services, even the radio and telecommunication facilities offer their services in 3 languages.

Despite the multiple channels, there are not many programs in Mongolian – or those that aim to spread knowledge about Mongolian culture and tradition. In the interviews, some teachers expressed their hopes that more Mongolian programs would be introduced, so that their students could have more access to Mongolian-related knowledge.

Our students do not know so much about traditional Mongolian celebration or festivals anymore. These traditions have already disappeared from here for many decades. I hope there are more multi-media resources for text books, Mongolian TV channel, Mongolian movies or Mongolian cartoon movies be made in the future so that students still get access to these old traditions and learn about their mother culture.

--Mongolian teacher

The use of the Chinese language is becoming more frequent for students in this community, which, in turn, has a huge impact on language learning. As a teacher has stated during the interview, learning Chinese is gradually becoming easier for Mongolian students, and their ability in Chinese is slowly outplaying their Mongolian language ability. Many teachers have expressed their concern about the future of the Mongolian language, as the environment is slowly leaning towards Chinese.

Relatively saying, speaking Chinese will be most widely popularized among people in the future. But spreading written Chinese is difficult because Chinese is a very difficult language to learn, especially the writing forms of Chinese.

--Chinese teacher 1

Sometimes Chinese is used between communication with the local villagers and government officials and banks. The ethno-linguistic environment of this area is not in favor for developing English. There is almost no place that one uses English to communicate, except for English classes in school.

The Internet is available in this village and used by some families for entertainment and communication in the area. But most of them use Chinese websites not English websites. Still, recently it has been very popular to watch English movies and TV shows with Chinese subtitles among youngsters in this village. Except for this, there is almost no use for English here.

Overall, the Mongolian ethno-linguistic vitality is the strongest in this village, while Chinese is occasionally used. And therefore, Chinese has the advantage to be more widely used and more popular in this area in the future.

6.3 Village School

6.3.1 Context of the village school

The case school was merged from two village schools in 2000. After merging, this

school became a boarding school, as some students are from villages that are 15km away or even further. The school maintains 9 years of compulsory education. There are 269 students, all Mongolian (6 classes), 15 teaching staff, and Mongolian is the medium of instruction in all classrooms.

The decoration in this school is very basic and simple, with elements of Mongolian culture to create atmosphere in the classrooms. The national flag is made using red and yellow color paper. With over 40 students in one classroom, the classroom is not big enough and usually very crowded; students' desks and tables are also old and wooden. Students usually speak to one another in Mongolian, and interviews with students show that almost all of them speak in Mongolian with even their teachers and parents. Once they leave school, they can speak in Chinese if the environment requires it. English is seldom used outside of English class.

The government here emphasizes on nurturing students with Mongolian culture, strong patriotic awareness, a high level of morality, and excellent knowledge acquisition. In the case school, all the students are required to perform 20 minutes of the national standard exercises broadcasted in the morning. Various activities are also organized by the school to enhance students' Mongolian culture awareness; these include poetry readings and Mongolian chess.

We have Mongolian chess class and also have launched chess competition in order to let students know about this part of Mongolian culture. We also have special teachers teaching students how to play Mongolian chess. But our teachers do not know how to play it. With time pass by, we hope every student in our school will know how to play this game and make it a school activity for extra- curriculum activity.

--Dean

6.3.2 Design

In this section, I will look at the curriculum design of the curriculum in this school, curriculum context, teaching and learning, and the students' outcome.

a) Aims

Preparatory education has played a great role in improving minority students' basic cultural knowledge, and enabling more students to continue their studies at secondary and higher specialized schools. It has become a unique way of developing education that is geared towards the needs of minority students.

Table 6.3.1

Aims filter in teaching of three languages

Five aspects of comprehensive abilities	Emotion and attitude, studying strategies, language ability, linguistic knowledge, and cultural awareness.
Language knowledge	Vocabularies, grammar, language function, topics and phonetic.
Linguistic ability	Listening, speaking, reading and writing.
Learning activities	Spelling, dictation, read out loud and to do reading comprehension and produce short articles.
Four basic skills	Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills

There are three aims to design curriculum in the school:

- I. To implement compulsory 9 years of education.
- II. To expose students to Mongolian instruction and the Mongolian language.
- III. To foster a sense of Mongolian culture in Mongolian students.

The aims of the filters in the teaching of the three languages in the school is shown in table 6.3.1. Briefly speaking, the aim of the curriculum is to help students form their own understanding of the world, about their lives, and form an ability to think critically, be autonomous, and yet have a cooperative learning spirit. Classroom education emphasizes on nurturing Mongolian pupils' awareness of their identity, and allowing them to get familiar with Mongolian history, culture, traditions, philosophy, and literature.

b) Curriculum Context

The case school uses Mongolian as the MOI, and all the subjects are based on the aim of establishing strong Mongolian culture and identify awareness with strong trilingual abilities. A simple but clear curriculum is implemented top-down in the school, and the local government policy supports the development of the school.

The overall design and implementation of the curriculum in the school lies in the various grades of teaching and evaluation; the material used is aimed to educate students step by step, and steadily nurture their comprehensive ability.

The school provides languages, math, moral education, science, music, art, and physical education. The school education system aims to lay the foundation of language competence and general knowledge, and prepare students for further education. The design of the curriculum is based on the national educational policy and national entrance exam policy.

School leaders have decided to set comprehensive objectives of how the curriculum is designed and implemented in the school. Each subject receives the same amount of attention and energy when planning, teaching, and assessing progress. By the end of the primary education, the village school aims to have nurtured students' cultural awareness, to have taught students studying strategies, and improve their language abilities and linguistic knowledge. Overall, students will form comprehensive knowledge in Mongolian and Chinese with very basic skills in English.

The time allocated for each language in this school is shown in table 6.3.2 below, from grade 1 to grade 5.

From grade 1 to 4, the Mongolian instruction period is 8 lessons per week. When students reach grade 5, these lessons are reduced to 7 per week. Chinese is taught from grade 1 through to grade 5, with 3 lessons per week. English is introduced to the curriculum at grade 3, with 3 lessons per week until grade 5. Both Chinese and

English steadily remain at 3 lessons up until grade 5.

Table 6.3.2

The number of hours dedicated to each language/subject every academic week

	Mongolian	Chinese	English
Grade 1	8	3	0
Grade 2	8	3	0
Grade 3	8	3	3
Grade 4	8	3	3
Grade 5	7	3	3

Chinese is taught using Mongolian as the MOI. Chinese is introduced with communication class in grade 1; but there is no formal textbook, and students are only taught how to speak in Chinese, not write. There is no testing for Chinese in grade 1 either. Chinese education remains a phonetic form of learning in grade 2, with students sticking to syllable identification, word and phrase exercises, and are only slightly concerned with reading comprehension and writing exercises.

The students' learning activities in English remain at the level of carrying out Basic English conversations, recognizing and memorizing simple words and phrases, and sometimes translating English to either Mongolian or Chinese. Just as with the other schools, essay-writing has merely been touched upon. However even these standards are difficult to maintain for village students, and there are two reasons for this: firstly, there is a lack of teachers who have received good English education; and secondly, there is not enough time to learn the language due to the tight schedule for the three languages. Some teachers have proposed to postpone the time when English is introduced, and also suggested the curriculum be adjusted to contextualize it better for minority students.

We suggest that at grade 3, first ask students to learn communicative or speaking English that does not require students to write or memorize words for a year. Then slowly move to recognizing alphabet learning letters and words. We even think that it's not necessary to ask

primary students to memorize words or learn to write in English. We can totally postpone this time to grade 6 or when enter to the middle school.

--English teacher

Apart from focusing on the officially required subjects that are normally found in the curriculum, some of the teachers and deans of the school have already started to add traditional Mongolian classes to the curriculum.

We suggest to open traditional Mongolian class as a subject to introduce students Mongolian culture, knowledge of Mongolian everyday living style, the daily tools, nomads animals knowledge and traditional games or customs, gestures and Mongolian proverbs or prayer.

--Chinese teacher

Overall, this primary school completes the task of teaching for 9 years as compulsory education under the relatively poor conditions – details of which will be discussed below.

c) Use of Resources

This school is inadequately resourced. The teaching and learning environment, as well as the condition of the school, is very basic and not well established. There are three rows of brick buildings in the school, used as teaching classrooms and teachers' offices, but there is still not enough room. The area is usually narrow and crowded, with around 17-19 teachers sitting and working together. Other than these buildings, there is also one canteen where students and teachers dine. There is no computer room, no multimedia teaching rooms, no Internet access, or TVs and radios in this school. The condition of the classrooms is very basic, with only simple Mongolian decoration on the walls. Students and teachers have to set up the fire themselves during the winters, when temperatures fall to -20 – -27 degrees Celsius. Many teachers have expressed the difficulty of teaching here in the interviews. As one teacher stated:

We really need to have more hardware or better equipment in our school and very much need to improve our condition. By looking at our working condition and students' living and learning condition, you can also see these needs.

--Dean of the school

The boarding school has two dormitories, with the girls and boys separated, with around 40-45 students living in one room. The dorm rooms also require students to set up the fires themselves to keep the area warm during the winters. This is not only inconvenient but also dangerous. However the students and school have no other choice. In the classroom, students' chairs and desks are made of wood, and are shabby in condition. Because 40-50 students occupy each classroom, the area is very crowded and the air is polluted – especially in winters, when the windows are covered with plastic in order to maintain the warmth.

There are 40 students in one classroom; there is almost no place to sit for students. Although students from other places want to come to our school, there is no enough room for them.

--Mongolian teacher

There is one soil playground with a few basic physical training machines laid out on one side.

“I have been a teacher in this school for more than 10 years. But during this period of time, this school has not receive any big amount of fiscal aid to improve teaching conditions, and school equipment or improve students' learning condition. They have torn down houses but I have not seen any buildings or houses being built here.”

--Chinese teacher 1

The table 6.3.3 shows students' views on the trilingual education arrangement in their school. Table 6.3.3 indicates that item 6 received highest score (4.80), showing that students in the village school strongly agree to the statement that more equipment, such as computers and language labs, should be provided to this school. Item 1 received the second highest score, of 4.78, indicating that students hold the view that minority education should be promoted more seriously in their schools.

Item 9 and item 3 are third and fourth respectively, with the scores 4.53 and 4.31, which indicates that students think minority students should know their own language first and then learn Chinese and English, and that English language teaching and learning should be improved in their school. Item 4 with a score of 4.17 indicates that students strongly believe that more and more minority teachers should be hired in their school because these minority teachers know their needs better than Chinese teachers.

Table 6.3.3

Students' View on Education Arrangement

Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in this school.	G3-6	121	1	5	4.78	.701
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in this school.	G3-6	121	1	5	3.99	.861
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in this school.	G3-6	121	1	5	4.31	.794
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by this school because they know minority pupils' needs better.	G3-6	121	1	5	4.17	1.044
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.	G3-6	121	1	5	2.50	1.089
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for this school.	G3-6	121	1	5	4.80	.770
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	G3-6	121	1	5	2.84	1.597
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, Because their learning abilities differ.	G3-6	121	1	5	1.92	1.429
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.	G3-6	121	1	5	4.53	.958
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.	G3-6	121	1	5	1.36	.966

The students give the minimum scores of 1.36 and 1.92 to item 10 and item 8 respectively, reflecting that minority students strongly disagree with the statement

that minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Chinese pupils, so English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them. They also strongly disagree that there should be different syllabi for Chinese and minority pupils, even in the same school. The students in the village school believe that they have the same ability to learn English as well as the Chinese students do.

Table 6.3.3 indicates that overall, the village, town, and city students' opinions are consistent on several points: Mongolian should be put as priority in trilingual education; students should learn their own minority language first then study Chinese and English; minority students have the same ability to achieve good proficiency in learning English, and should use the same syllabus as Chinese students; and they all want to add more teaching and learning equipment to their respective schools. They also expressed that more and more minority teachers should be hired by their schools, as these minority teachers know their needs better than Chinese teachers.

d) Staff Profile

All the teaching staff here are bachelor degree holders, who have received professional teaching internship and knowledge from normal university. All of them hold teaching certificates that are issued by the 19 Mongolian teachers are all Mongolian ethnic with bachelor degree. They are fluent in Mongolian and Chinese. Among the 8 Chinese teachers, there is 1 Han Chinese teacher who is monolingual, and 1 Mongolian Chinese teacher who does not speak Mongolian but understands it. As for the 2 English teachers, both are Mongolian and can speak three languages. Mongolian teachers occupy a large percentage of the teacher profile.

Mongolian teachers' duties include: being in charge of the teaching activities and be the head teacher of the class. Each Chinese teacher is in charge of two classes' teaching. 2 English teachers are in charge for 3 classes' teaching; each of them has 9 lessons per week. Both Chinese and English teachers expressed their wish to have

more teaching staff to join their group, so that the workload can be decreased.

Some of the Mongolian teachers as well as the dean of the school also expressed the same concern, and noticed the heavy workload for teachers. Specifically, the merging of the two schools has added more difficulties for the school management.

“On the one hand urbanization and merging school is an inevitable trend. The reason for saying this is because more and more people are becoming immigrant workers to the town and cities, they send back money to their children and that gives them opportunities to choose whichever school they want to go. Some schools in remote area do not have enough students’ resources, and they choose to come here. So, eventually we merged schools into one and let students around this village come to study here altogether. But on the other hand this has downside, for example, some students are very young and have to live in the boarding school. Managing young students especially taking care of their living and their learning gives teachers a lot of stress. Many students cannot take care of themselves.”

--Dean

Another problem that some teachers and deans have stated in the interview is that this school has a lack of specially trained professional teachers for Art, P.E, music, and English.

“We lack of professional teachers who is graduated from art, P.E, English, dancing and music. Chinese English teachers are not suitable for Mongolian students because they cannot understand Mongolian and it is difficult to teach Mongolian students.”

-----Chinese teacher 1

There are many opportunities for the teachers in the school to participate in teacher training sessions and knowledge transformation activities. Some of the activities are held within IMAR and sometimes they are sent to visit schools outside of the region. Usually the school or organizer reimburses the cost, but, according to the feedback from the interviews, the sustainability part of this kind of training is a problem. For example, the teachers had been to Liaoning province last year at certain Han schools, where they learnt how to teach subjects and manage students. But, the problem is, even if the teachers and management teams go to schools that have good conditions and better equipment, and although they learn a lot from these schools, when they

return they face many practical difficulties in implementing the same kind of teaching methods in their own classrooms. This is due to the fact that their schools are not at the same level as the schools they visit.

Another problem that is concerned with teacher resources in this school is that many of the teachers are old and leaning towards retirement. The school has difficulty hiring new young teachers, due to the socioeconomic status of the area, and the condition of the school itself, which is relatively poor. Geographically, this school is also quite a distance from the downtown area, which is another disadvantage that stops young graduates from working here. As the dean of human resources said:

“We have a serious problem that is most of the teachers in this school is getting old and close to retire. But young teachers do not like to come to work here because of its natural, social economic condition.”

--Dean of human resources

The Table 6.3.4 below shows village teachers' view on language and education implemented in their school.

With reference to the teachers' view on languages and language education (Table 6.3.4), item 1 (4.80) and item 10 (4.70) were evaluated to receive the first and the second highest mean scores respectively. This indicates that teachers strongly agree that the home language of the minority pupils is important, as it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well. And the key importance for minority pupils is to do well in their own language first and then learn all the other subjects – including Chinese and English equally well as Chinese students. Item 7 with a score of 4.1 is ranked the third. It indicates that teachers in the village school strongly agree with the statement that if English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the New English Standard (English textbook).

Item 8 with a score of 4.00 is ranked as the fourth highest, indicating that the language used to teach and learn English (the inter-language) should be the minority

language, but not Chinese. Item 4 with a score of 3.60 indicates that teachers here in village school agree that minority culture in the village is backward. Minorities generally reject anything foreign – including foreign languages.

Table 6.3.4

Teachers' views on language and education

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well.	10	1	5	4.80	.632
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subjects.	10	1	5	1.80	1.476
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils.	10	1	5	3.10	1.663
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages.	10	1	5	3.60	1.174
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly.	10	1	5	1.60	1.265
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese.	10	1	5	1.60	.516
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the New English Standard.	10	1	5	4.10	.316
8. The language used to teach and learn English, inter-language, should be the minority language, but not Chinese Mandarin.	10	1	5	4.00	1.247
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, without bothering to learn the minority language.	10	1	5	2.00	1.633
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is, first of all, to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects, including Chinese and English equally well.	10	1	5	4.70	.675

The teachers assigned the lowest score, 1.60, to item 5 and item 6, proving that the statement saying minority students have an intellectually lower ability to learn languages compared to Han students is not true. Also that minority students should be taught English, although they also need to learn Chinese.

Item 9 with the score 2.0 ranked as the third lowest score in this study, indicating that minority teachers strongly disagree with the statement saying all minority students should follow the same syllabus for Chinese and English as Han pupils, without bothering to learn the minority language. The other entire statement item that scored lower than 2.36 indicates that teachers value the Mongolian culture and language in their teaching, and, based on the mother language, Mongolian students have the ability to learn Chinese and English as well as Chinese students.

6.4 Implementation

6.4.1 Teaching and learning

The time I visited the school and observed the lessons was close to final examinations, and hence the activities in the classroom were exam-oriented. In my opinion, the teaching on a daily basis otherwise is also exam-oriented, and that the teaching system itself is an exam-driven system. In a way, the teaching and learning activities under the stress of examinations is a true reflection of their teaching ideologies. Students learn by working in activity books, doing extra exercises, or practicing model exams. The studying method is teacher-dominated and task-focused, and the pattern of communication is one-way. The teachers initiate the questions and the students answer; there is no other pattern of communication.

The classrooms are very crowded. But this does not affect students' participation and their interaction with teachers. During class, most of the students show obedience, and learn quietly. Only a few students are very active and play a key role in interacting with the teacher in the class. Questions include clarifying classroom assessment requirements, assisting the teacher to keep the classroom in order, answering some of the questions asked by peers, and assisting the teacher in collecting homework.

Students' learning outcomes are assessed through classroom assessments, homework, and exams at the end of each semester and year. These can be divided into knowledge-acquisition tasks, higher-order thinking tasks, and teachers' evaluation of behavior. Well-instructed tasks include memory testing, dictation, and reading out loud using the target language. This appears to be relatively easy for students. Less structured tasks, such as higher thinking tasks, reading comprehension, role-play, and writing short articles, appear to be very challenging for students. Not all the students can give answers correctly, which then requires the teacher to follow-up with the tasks by elaborating the problem-solving process. Less-structured tasks include assisting students to do role-play in language learning, comprehensive reading, and writing. But less-structured tasks are more cognitively and strategically difficult. Hence, the main teaching tasks type in this school is well-structured tasks.

The students' Mongolian learning in this school is ranked at second or third place in this town. The teachers are quite confident of their students' performance in the language. But Chinese and English teachers all discussed the problems they had encountered when teaching students in grade 2 and 3; the most common issue was that students would confuse the Chinese pinyin and English letters:

“The learning ability is the same between Han students and Mongolian students. But the timing is not fair to Mongolian students compared with Han students. Mongolian students have to learn one more language. My students also confuse pinyin with English letter. This phenomenon is very severe. They confuse it very much!”

--English teacher

Because it is a boarding school, teachers usually have night-shift duties and night classes in order to assist students in completing their homework, or tutor them one-on-one. But, unlike the students at town level who have many extra exercises to complete, the homework for students in this school is restricted to only the PEP published workbook.

“Time is not enough for students, they do not have enough energy to learn three language. They don't have enough time to do exercises books except for textbooks and workbook from PEP.”

--Chinese teacher, and dean of the school

Even the minimum homework is becoming a heavy load for the students here, either due to the time distributed in learning three languages, or the large classroom sizes that cause learning differences among the students.

6.4.2 Language of instruction

When looking closely at the use of language in the three language classes, it is conclusive that the most frequently used language is Mongolian.

“Actually, for Mongolian students who are studying at Mongolian primary school, we emphasize the importance of learning Mongolian to them. Mongolian is their mother language.”

--Mongolian teacher

Chinese and English lessons also make use of Mongolian as the main medium of instruction. It is observed that in the classroom the teacher uses Chinese to elaborate questions and emphasize learning points when necessary. Most of the time the teachers use Chinese when explaining rules, translating questions, or when the students are confused. When the need arises to reinforce knowledge, Mongolian is occasionally used. English and Chinese classes are more grammar and vocabulary-focused.

The Mongolian language is restricted to the context of the textbook, workbook, and homework. There are not large amount of examples that are drawn from daily life, or related to Mongolian history or culture. The language taught is more practical and up to date – words and phrases that can be used in daily life and everyday communication – and remains at the primary level of language usage.

“Mongolian is the main foundation for all the subjects. Even when teaching Chinese and English, teachers need to explain to students the meaning in Mongolian, otherwise students won’t understand.”

-Dean

Some of the Chinese teachers mentioned that there is a difference between Mongolian and Chinese students in other schools' ability in Chinese. While Mongolian students are still learning pinyin, and drawing connections between the grammar and semantics, Chinese students have already started to develop and enrich their knowledge of Chinese literature. Mongolian students are still solving stimuli and responses, but Chinese students have started completing higher-order tasks and writing argumentative essays. In essence, the grammar and vocabulary that Mongolian students learn at grade 4 is equivalent to Chinese students' learning at grade 2.

“As for Chinese and English, there is also necessity to learn them too. Especially, Chinese is our national language. So if students graduate and enter to the society, when communicating, of course they will use national language to communicate.”

--Chinese teacher

In the classroom students communicate with each other only in Mongolian. Because of the ethno-linguistic vitality of this community and the frequent use of Mongolian in communication outside of school, the situation of the Chinese language is not as good as Mongolian.

6.4.3 Teacher-students' interaction

There are four clear patterns when it comes to the instructions given by teachers in this particular school. These are reinforcement and correction, supporting, linking, and challenging. While teaching students basic language skills, or asking them to do well-structured tasks such as finding synonyms/antonyms, dictation, and checking spelling, teachers appear to praise or reinforce the students' answers and ideas. When students make errors, teachers usually follow up with immediate correction and swift movement to the next question. Some of the dictation tasks or classroom assessments, tests, or homework is checked on time.

There are occasions when group tasks are distributed to students during a Mongolian lesson, and students need to be divided into small groups to role-play. The teachers naturally engage in their teamwork to help them prepare and understand the characters better, and guide them overall. Mongolian lessons are a combination of structured and less structured tasks. Tasks not only include reading out loud, memorizing poetry, dictation, and finding synonyms/antonyms, but students are also performing role-plays, writing argumentative essays, and completing reading comprehension. Because Mongolian is the students' mother tongue, in which they are already fairly fluent, their level of engagement during Mongolian class is the highest out of the three language lessons. There is a clear pattern in teachers' instruction from primary 1 to 5. The knowledge structure also changes from the acquisition of basic knowledge to the formation of internal knowledge. During Mongolian classes, the teacher not only supports students in their learning activities, but also challenges them to brainstorm using their general knowledge, and refine their knowledge structure. For these students, Mongolian is not only a tool of communication; it is a carrier of their culture and identity.

During Chinese classes, the teachers usually use a fixed sequence of instructions to help students gain basic knowledge of pinyin, practice their Chinese speaking ability, and build up their vocabulary. A lot of time is also dedicated to repeating after the teacher in order to practice the students' oral skills and improve their reading ability. Chinese teachers also immediately correct students' mistakes and give them feedback more often than Mongolian or English teachers would do. Well-structured tasks include finding synonyms/antonyms, matching the pinyin to Chinese characters, reading articles in standard Chinese, and writing short descriptive articles. Less structured tasks, such as reading comprehension, and solving tasks in groups, are found in higher-level classrooms, in grade 4-5. However teachers have expressed in their interviews that the students' comprehensive reading and writing ability is restricted because Chinese is a foreign language for them. Their confidence on their students' Chinese speaking ability is also not very high, because they know their students have a Mongolian accent while speaking in Chinese.

On the other hand, English lessons mainly focus on well-structured tasks; tasks such as dictation, reading out loud, and reading after the teacher. Unlike Mongolian and Chinese, there are no less-structured tasks in English lessons. Teachers mainly spend their time evaluating and checking students' pronunciation and ability to memorize vocabulary. The lack of equipment to play cassettes or CDs of English recordings makes it very difficult for students to be exposed to an authentic English environment, or learn English songs/dialogues, or pick up the accent accurately. In this particular school, there is only 1 English teacher, and he is Chinese. Although he can understand Mongolian, he cannot speak the language, and therefore uses Chinese as the medium of instruction in his English lessons. This does not seem to be a problem for the students, as they switch between the two languages with apparent ease. The lessons are teacher-led; students rarely raise questions or make comments of the textbook content. There is no role-play or group activities during English class, and the pattern of questioning is one-way and teacher-dominated. An analysis of the English classroom discourse shows that the teacher occupied approximately 76% of the talk time with classroom instructions. The teacher asked all of the 64 questions raised in the classroom.

6.5 Outcomes

Overall, students' language acquisition in terms of Mongolian, Chinese, and English vary. In Mongolian, they acquire very solid knowledge of the basic language, develop an internal knowledge structure, and are able to refine it using the teachers' help. Various kinds of assessment within the classroom, or at the end of the semester, serve to facilitate the learning process.

The Mongolian language outcome is strong in this school. But in the interviews the teachers say that students' ability in writing is restricted within the area of forming ideas in Mongolian language, lacking comprehensive vocabulary. Some teachers attribute this phenomenon to the ethno-linguistic environment outside of school. They think that the main factor that has impacted students' Mongolian writing is the

Chinese dominant media and increasing amount of Chinese being used in their daily life. The other factor is that the resources for Mongolian reading is not rich for students. Although the mass media includes Mongolian TV and radio channels, with the impact and popular force of many Chinese TV shows, English or American movies, the time and interest that students put into learning Mongolian culture and knowledge through the Mongolian channel is not as much as they give to Chinese and English.

“Students’ Chinese ability is about to out-perform their Mongolian ability. We try to speak Mongolian only in the school. But outside of school they see and hear more and more Chinese. The environment is being influenced more and more by Chinese culture. So it is easy for them to learn Chinese than learn Mongolian.”

--Mongolian teacher

As for Chinese, students are offered lessons to learn basic grammar points, are fluent in communication, and become literate in the language with basic writing skills and some reading comprehension skills. They have no difficulties in communicating in Chinese in society. Comparatively speaking, students learn Chinese faster than they learn Mongolian. Chinese seems to be easier for them to learn than Mongolian. TV is almost all in Chinese and the Chinese language has a trend of increasing in daily communication. As some teachers have said in their interviews:

“How many people are speaking Mongolian like us? Half of the parents use mixed languages speaking both Mongolian and Chinese. Although this village is Mongolian population dominate, but the environment is not 100% Mongolian anymore.”

--Chinese teacher

“Mongolian is a very beautiful language with very rich vocabularies and artistic expression and historical and cultural roots. But nowadays students cannot learn this language very well. First they do not have that authentic environment anymore, outside of school it is all in Chinese. Secondly, they have too much stress to learn English, to learn Chinese at that young age. Balancing time for three languages is very big challenge for both teachers and students.”

--Mongolian teacher

Teachers believe their students’ performance in Chinese the better than the other two

languages. The school has its own standard of measuring students learning outcomes by setting up a points-based system, and all the students are required to pass the mark bend. The Chinese score is usually above 90 out of 100. The Chinese teachers in this school believe that their students' Chinese level is at 1st or 2nd place compared with the other village schools within the area.

“Students’ Chinese ability is restricted. They only use Chinese in the classroom but do not use Chinese at the other occasion in the school.”

--Mongolian teacher

“It is impossible for the Mongolian students to have as good Chinese ability as Chinese. The factors impacting these outcomes are school environment, living environment and family environment. They only hear Chinese, the rest of the subjects are learnt in Mongolian. Family use mainly Mongolian.”

--Chinese teacher

As for English, the learning outcomes are not very positive. Students learn some English letters and gain a basic vocabulary. Still their level of communication, as well as reading, writing, and listening skills remain relatively low in English out of the three languages. But the dean pointed out importance of learning English:

“As for English, if you look at the score distribution for each subject in exams, the English subject also occupies certain percentage of score, so students also need to learn English.”

--Dean

The students become curious and interested in learning English. If they follow the teachers’ instructions and guidance, the students can complete simple English games and role-play. By the end of their studies at this school, students can also sing English songs and speak in simple sentences. They are willing to try in their learning and have no difficulties in expressing simple, personal emotions, such as like, dislike, happy, unhappy, etc. In terms of writing, only some students can write the words correctly that are on the vocabulary lists in the textbooks.

6.5.1 Perspectives of Students on Trilingual Education

The study on the perspectives of students on trilingual education show that students in the village want a change in the trilingual model in their school. The students in this school rated themselves with very strong spoken, written Mongolian, and very good spoken and written English abilities.

Figure 6.5.1

Village School Students' Perceptions on Trilingual Education Model

	Item	Level	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I find it appropriate to start using Chinese as MOI in Chinese lessons in G2.	G4-5	123	1	5	3.97	1.071
2	I enjoy the trilingual education model implemented in the school.	G4-5	123	1	5	1.72	.996
3	I feel comfortable switching from one language to another when studying different subjects in the school.	G4-5	123	1	5	1.41	.857
4	I feel comfortable studying the English subject using English as the MOI.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.80	.836
5	I feel comfortable studying the Chinese subject using Chinese as the MOI.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.56	.770
6	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject.	G4-5	123	1	5	3.10	1.358
7	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study of the Chinese subject.	G4-5	123	1	5	2.75	1.157
8	I find co-switching in different subjects useful for my language development in general.	G4-5	123	1	5	3.20	1.324
9	I am happy with my progress in the study of written English.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.05	1.023
10	I am happy with my progress in the study of written Chinese	G4-5	123	1	5	2.06	1.210
11	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken English.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.25	.997
12	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Chinese.	G4-5	123	1	5	2.45	1.209
13	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Mongolian.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.86	.644
14	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written English.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.63	.682
15	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written Chinese.	G4-5	123	1	5	2.84	1.345
16	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken English.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.45	.842
17	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Chinese.	G4-5	123	1	5	3.23	1.007

18	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Mongolian.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.96	.198
19	I would like to have P.E and Art to be taught in English.	G4-5	123	1	5	4.81	.548

Figure 6.5.1 is about a questionnaire to access students' perceptions and feelings towards their experience in the trilingual model that they have.

Their Chinese speaking ability was rated the lowest out of the three languages. The students in the village do have very strong desires to be exposed to more of an English environment, item 19 received the highest score among all the items, with a score of 4.7, showing students' strong wish to use English as the medium of instruction during P.E and Art. Items 14 and 4 received the second and the third highest points respectively – 4.63 and 4.62 – indicating that they feel confident that when they graduate they will achieve good proficiency in written English, and they feel comfortable using English as the MOI in English class. But item 6 with a score of 3.63 indicates that students co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly when studying English.

Item 18 with a score of 4.53 and standard deviation of .947 indicates that most of the students agreed that their spoken Mongolian would reach a high proficiency when they graduate. Item 11 scores 4.34, showing that students are happy with their progress in their spoken English. The score for satisfaction of speaking Mongolian for these students', item 13, is 4.13, which is lower than their satisfaction in spoken English.

It was also clear that these students feel overall that it is appropriate to start learning Chinese from grade 2 using Chinese as the MOI. Item 17, 15, and 10 have scores of 3.90, 3.70, and 3.66 respectively, showing that these students are confident that their spoken and written Chinese can achieve a good level of proficiency when they graduate and they are happy with their current progress in Chinese. The lowest scoring item is 7, with a score of 2.03. It was apparent that they disagree with the saying that they co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study

of the Chinese subject. The second lowest score is item 8, with a score of 2.16. This indicates that students think co-switching in different subjects is not useful for their language development in general. In terms of their progress in English writing, the students' attitude is neutral, with item 9 scoring 2.60.

It was perceived that the students scored 1.72 with item 2 with a standard deviation of 0.996. This indicates that overall these students do not enjoy the trilingual model that is implemented in their school. It was perceived that item 18 received the highest score among all the items, with a score of 4.96, showing their strong confidence in achieving good proficiency in spoken Mongolian when they graduate from school. The second lowest score is item 10, with a score of 2.06. This indicates that they are not satisfied with their Chinese writing learning progress in general. And item 15 with a score of 2.84 shows that they are not very confident to achieve a good proficiency in Chinese writing when they graduate. In terms of their progress in spoken Mongolian, these students' attitude is neutral with item 12, scoring 2.45.

Item 11 scores 4.25 shows that students are happy with their progress in their speaking English. Item 9 with score of 4.05 indicates that those students are happy with their spoken English progress. Item 16 with score 4.45 shows that they are very confident that their spoken English will achieve good proficiency when they graduate.

Item 17 scores 3.23 shows that although those students are confident that they're spoken Chinese can achieve a good proficiency; this confidence is lower than Mongolian and English respectively by 1.73 and 1.22. Item 14 with a score of 4.63 indicate that these students strongly agree that when they graduate they will achieve good proficiency in written English.

Items 13 received the second and highest score 4.86 indicating that these students are happy with their progress in spoken Mongolian. In terms of language that is used for MOI to teach subjects, item 19 with score 4.81 indicating that they strongly hope to use English as the MOI in P.E and art subject learning. Item 4 with score 4.80 they feel very comfortable with using English as the MOI to learn English subject. Item 5

with score 4.56 means they like using Chinese to learn Chinese. But item 6 with score of 3.10 indicates that students co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject.

Item 1 with score 3.97 means in general the students in this school think it is appropriate to start learning Chinese in Chinese as MOI from grade 1. Item 7 with a score of 2.75 indicate that students sometimes co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese during Chinese class. Lowest score item is item 3 with a score of 1.41. It was apparent that they feel not comfortable co-switch among three languages in their everyday learning activities.

6.5.2 Assessment

There are three major tests for students; homework, classroom assessments given by teachers, and mid-term and end of semester examinations. The final test taken at the end of each semester is town-wide and issued by the local educational bureau. Teachers in class, using resources such as the PEP workbook or corresponding exercise books bought from the bookstore, give all the other forms of assessment.

“Usually, we do not compare students’ score among different schools in the town, so we do not know how our students are ranked in terms of final exam results. The educational bureau issue standard tests. All the primary school students take the same pack of tests. Every other few years, educational bureau will choose one or two grades of students to enroll in tests to see their learning outcomes.”

--Chinese teacher

The local educational bureau also assesses teachers. The assessment results are linked with teachers’ remuneration and bonus of the year. These assessment criteria include their workload, attendance, students’ score, teacher’s lesson plans, and occasional lesson observation from the local educational bureau.

The time allocation and teacher assessment system, which are all clearly written at the last few pages of teacher guide book, illustrate clearly how many teaching hours

should be distributed to each unit and what are the main learning points. The implementation of this guidance is authorized by the national educational bureau to the local educational bureau to eradicate tasks for teachers. Teachers' performance includes their lesson plans, teaching competition results, their students' performance in the tests that are mentioned above, and the school managing team's observations. The teachers in this school usually achieve their teaching goals, and are able to meet the educational bureau's expectations as well as the local community's needs. The students' performances and teachers' reputation are considered as top level among the other village schools within the town.

6.6 Sustainability

The main teaching objectives at this school focus on Mongolian and Chinese, and hence the standard of English here is not very good. What has caused this phenomenon is the weak ethno-linguistic vitality for English outside of school. With an increase in trade, the development of business, and the cross-cultural activities between the Han Chinese and Mongolians, the ability to speak Chinese here is improving, but this also causes a disadvantage for the Mongolian language. Although communicative Mongolian is still widely used in this village, in terms of the culture, customs, traditions, and lifestyle, there has already been assimilation with the Chinese. Teachers who have been interviewed mentioned that, when comparing the ethno-linguistic vitality of the Mongolian language of this village to other places in IMAR (such as *Xilingaole* and *Hulunbur*), the Mongolian life style, everyday customs and cuisine here is almost like Chinese. The only difference is that they can still speak Mongolian.

The students' Mongolian vocabulary is relatively poor compared with the town students' in this study for various reasons. For example, there are not enough Mongolian bookstores or magazines, and too many Chinese programs on TV and games on the Internet available. Students may know of a few Disney movies or pop

songs, but that's about it. Overall, in terms of sustainability, Chinese has the strongest advantage here among the three languages, but Mongolian still has some advantages here – after all, it is still a Mongolian-dominated village. However, it is very difficult for English to survive here. Although students are learning English, they have no use of it except for school entrance examinations. It is a foreign language and the least used for them.

In society, their Chinese writing and reading skills will frequently be put to use, while Mongolian reading and writing will hardly be used. However since most of the students' parents are Mongolian, the language can still be found in daily communication within the family context. Yet the level of vocabulary and the context itself will be restricted at the level of daily communication.

As mentioned above, English is the least used language here for the students. Although at town and city level it has been found that Mongolian students' English performance is better than that of Chinese students, this is not the case at village-level. There are many reasons as to why, but one of the most important factors is that there is no Mongolian or bilingual English teacher here. Unlike the teachers at town or city level, who have received systematic English education training, only some of the teachers here have been sent to short-term English teacher training programs. They are neither bachelor degree holders nor English major graduates.

Mongolian students have better ability in pronunciation due to Mongolian phonological characteristics. Mongolian students acquire a basic foundation of Mongolian pronunciation and spelling, and then learning Chinese Pinyin. However the teaching and learning conditions of this place are very basic, and there is only teacher-centered teaching that focuses on manual repetition of copying vocabulary or memorizing textbooks. There are no multimedia or auditory resources available or being used here to teach. In a small village as such, the opportunity to use English is almost non-existent.

6.7 Discussion

In this section, I will show the trend of curriculum development of this school and discuss how the teaching model is implemented, the problems that appeared in implementation, and the factors that are underpinning the model in the village school.

6.7.1 Distribution of School Curriculum in the Village School

It was found in the curriculum development that Mongolian, as the main learning subject, has a tendency to decrease. By graduation, the curriculum shows that students achieve additive trilingualism, and the time distribution of Chinese and English becomes the same, since by grade 4 Mongolian has double timing over these two subjects. All of the students in village school start learning Mongolian and Chinese in grade 1. English is introduced to curriculum in grade 3. Mongolian is given to students 8 lessons per week until grade 4, and then decreased to 7 lessons per week.

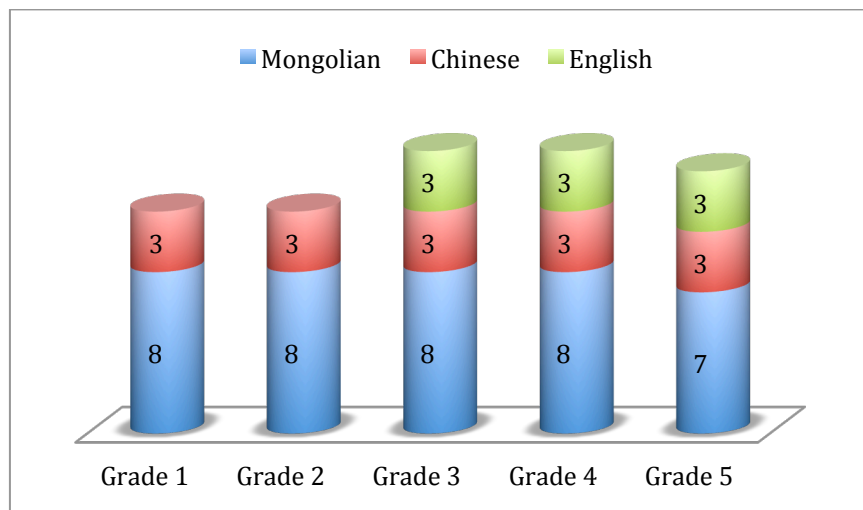


Figure 6.7.1 *Curriculum Distribution of Village School*

As Mongolian is being taught as the foundational language of learning, it has to make

room for the other two languages. Chinese remains at 3 lessons per week through all of their primary education. By the time the students reach grade 4, there appears a balance between the three languages. It is because by the time students reach grade 4, they overcome the difficulties of identifying phonemic and pictographic script among the three languages.

While agreeing with the context of curriculum design, Chinese and English teachers have all expressed their concern about the time allocation of English in curriculum. Their main concern is focused on students' learning ability while coping with three different kinds of languages. Mongolian, Chinese, and English all belong to different language system. They belong to the Altai, Han-Tibetan, and Anglo-Saxon language systems, respectively. The common opinion is that it is too early to start learning how to write in English at grade 3.

“It is a little bit early for students to learn English from grade 3. It is because the students start to learn Pinyin in grade 2 and at grade 3 students get into a critical stage of learning Chinese word and Chinese phrases. English becomes the third language. Learning three languages at this stage is difficult for students.”

--Chinese teacher, English teacher

It is necessary to invest more money to build and improve Mongolian nationality schools. Although the government at the city and regional levels have distributed a lot of money to improve the school conditions, it seems that village schools are not getting a lot of the funds. This raises the question: what happens during the implementation process? Where did all the money go that is given to build or improve school conditions?

“Our reality is this: we do not have enough fiscal funds to build or improve our school condition. For our school, we are lacking of teaching buildings, students' dormitory, teacher's office place and students' classrooms. There is not enough teaching equipment, teaching aid or teaching materials in our school; even some basic necessity to maintain everyday work is not even enough.”

--Dean

There is a big difference in governmental aid and fiscal support in western IMAR and eastern IMAR. There is also a big difference in implementation between western and eastern IMAR. It is said that schools in the minority areas can benefit from educational policies that favors the minority. But the reality is that this village school has not received any significant benefits.

Fiscal aid given to schools according to students' numbers is only sufficient enough to cover daily maintenance of the school. If the schools need to build new school buildings, improve the heating system, add more studying equipment, or build new dormitories, they require corresponding supporting aids that specifically help them develop the school environment, and provide more resources to the school. For example, the need to build bigger studying buildings, teachers' office places, students' dormitory buildings, enlarge their library, and build a safer playground.

Bringing new technology and multimedia equipment to the school is urgently in need. In a technological world where the knowledge, ideas, latest developments, and news are all vastly available on the Internet, this school seems like an isolated place that has little connection with the outside world. The future of education is technological competition. If the village school has not be able to spread using modern technology in their everyday teaching, then trilingual education is not fully implemented yet. And certainly, by using the best resources they can help students achieve the best outcomes of additive trilingualism.

6.8 Conclusion

The curriculum design, teaching aims, distribution of human resources, and the school environment proves that the accretive model of trilingual education is implemented in this village school. The school is in a Mongolian dominated environment, and the ethno-linguistic environment in this place is in favor of Mongolian. Mongolian is the main communicative language and main medium of instruction within the school.

Mongolian students' perceptions show that most of them are very confident that by the end of their primary study, they will achieve good proficiency in spoken Mongolian, spoken English, and spoken Chinese. They also feel confident that when they graduate school they will have achieved good proficiency in writing in the three languages. But in terms of their Mongolian speaking progress, students are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The increasing Chinese ethno-linguistic environment outside of the school has a strong impact on this outcome. On the other hand, teachers also pointed out in their interview that, as a prairie language, Mongolian needs its root environment to maintain its richness. But with the hit from the local Chinese media, frequent trade exchanges with the Chinese, and local policies of banning nomads, the Mongolian language has been losing its authentic environment severely in this area. However, Mongolian school students do form a strong Mongolian ethnic identity and internal knowledge of this language, and are able to do comprehensive reading and argumentative writing tasks in the language. Mongolian is clearly impacted and decreased by the Chinese ethno-linguistic environment outside of school, but this phenomenon is not as strong as in the city level schools.

Students become fluent in Chinese, are able to write simple descriptive essays, and do comprehensive reading in the language. They learn Chinese at such a level that they can carry out conversations in the language when they need to, specifically when talking to the Chinese. These students think it is appropriate to start learning Chinese from grade 1, and use Chinese and the main MOI in Chinese class. But they co-switch between Chinese and Mongolian in Chinese class. Teachers in this school think that with more and more invasion of Chinese culture in their daily lives, students not only show more interest in learning Chinese, but they also learn Chinese faster than Mongolian.

The level of English is restricted to the vocabulary in their textbooks, and doing some basic well-structured tasks such as translate English words or short sentences into Chinese. Students can do some simple comprehensive reading, finish single choice quizzes, and carry out very simple English conversations. In terms of grammar, some

students form the basic knowledge, but most of them cannot do comprehensive reading or narrative writing tasks. Interestingly, the students in this school wish to change their curriculum structure and have P.E and art to be taught in English. They also believe that using English to teach English is appropriate for them. Not only so, their confidence in spoken English and writing English is higher than what they rated for Chinese. The students showed more requirements to get exposed to the English language, and wish for more chances to practice their English. Due to the fact that these students have good Mongolian and Chinese ability, the idea of improving their English is achievable. However, it requires better bilingual teachers who understand their mother language and are professionally trained to teach English. Besides this, the basic teaching conditions can be changed with fiscal aid from local governments or the provincial government. Once English multimedia resources, the Internet, and more appropriate practicing materials are introduced and applied into teaching in this village school, village students' English ability will improve.

The accretive model is achieved under a coherent system of design, delivery, assessment of outcomes, and sustainability of outcomes in this school. Teaching goals and education objectives filters through in the curriculum design, teaching activities, and curriculum implementation. Different teaching objectives, in terms of the Mongolian, Chinese, and English language, are achieved respectively by grade 3, 4, and 5. Students will usually gain a strong Mongolian ethnic identity, develop a good ability in communicating in the Mongolian language, and will have nurtured interests in learning foreign languages to be ready to broaden their depth of language knowledge. Although this school has relatively low performance in English testing outcomes, students and teachers here are enthusiastic about learning a foreign language. This model has fostered trilingualism, and serves the purpose of preparing Mongolian students to attend Mongolian middle schools, with good bilingual competence and considerable amount of English knowledge.

Factors that are fostering the implementation are historical and political. The demographic construction, local government policies, governmental financial support, teacher resources, teacher development, stakeholders' attitude, and perceptions of

Mongolian education are factors that are affecting trilingual education implementation in this village.

The local economic growth is relatively low compared to the town and city level schools. But in terms of ethno-linguistic vitality, this place has an environment that is stronger than at city level in terms of a Mongolian ethno-linguistic environment. But teaching resources and fiscal aid is really a problem that this school is facing. For students, extra exercises books, resources, and multimedia-learning resources are not enough. In terms of human resources, many teachers are about to retire and there are not enough.

In terms of the school environment, this school is barely a modern school as the teaching offices and classrooms are all very crowded. The dormitory and canteen of the students is very basic too. Decoration includes posters in Mongolian, English, and Chinese words. English has become a major testing subject for school entrance exams only since 2010, and is introduced to the curriculum from grade 3.

The main reason that this school is an accretive model is because of the demographic features of this village. This school is surrounded by a Mongolian ethnolinguistic environment. While the town school shows the strongest accretive model among these three schools, there are many things that the village school can learn from the town school. Theoretically, the village school has the potential of building a really strong accretive model, because, in terms of an ethno-linguistic environment, the social economic status of parents, and teacher resources, the village school does not differ very much from the town school. And demographically, more than 70% of the population in the village is Mongolian, whereas in town it is only 14% of the population that is Mongolian. Town school students are from nomadic backgrounds, where the nomad's life style is better maintained than in the villages. This is an advantage to students in their Mongolian study. But there is significant difference between these two schools in terms of the fiscal aid that they receive, and the extent that students and teachers are exposed to Mongolian culture is also different.

Economically, the social economic backgrounds of students in this school is similar to the students in the town school but lower than the city school students. The economic development of this village is the least out of the three places. In terms of receiving fiscal aid for school development, this school also receives the least. Compared with the other two schools in this case study, the village school is relatively in the poorest condition. The school size, school hardware, teaching and learning conditions, pedagogical concepts, assessing system, and students' living conditions are all the poorest in the village school. Although there is an impact of the Chinese culture, the accretive model in this school can be developed into a stronger one with considerable amount of investment and financial aid. Teachers and students' working, studying, and living conditions is very different between the town and the village school. While town school is fully equipped with modern teaching tools, and large and warm classrooms buildings, the village school has very basic teaching conditions and no heating system. Town school teachers have laptop and desktop computer for each teacher, but village school teachers are working crowded in one office with no modern equipment such as computer or internet.

In terms of teacher development and student development, there is significant difference too. The town school organizes knowledge transformation activities each year, where they sending teachers to enroll in different workshops or teaching competitions to improve their teaching quality, practice new teaching pedagogy, and exchange experience and knowledge with teachers from IMAR or even in Shanghai or Liaoning. Some of the English teachers participated at the English training campus at Peking University, or have been sent abroad to improve their English. Such chances are much smaller for village teachers. Occasionally, there are workshops held within the town that the village belongs to, but in terms of participating in teaching competitions or visiting other schools in IMAR or outside of IMAR, there have not been many. The financial cost is a burden for them as there are no special funds from the local government to support them in such activities, nor is there an opportunity for the teachers to study abroad or go outside of IMAR. The chances for students to see the outside world and compete with students from the other areas of IMAR are also very limited in this village school. It is very normal for town students to participate in

reading, writing, and dancing competition in IMAR. And they are constantly receiving first, second, or third prizes in such competitions. But for the village students, this is something intimidating to get involved in, and they seldom have chances to do so.

The city school has many advantages to develop trilingual education, and yet the biggest barrier to develop it as well. Economically, it is the fastest and finest developed among the three schools; politically, it is the first circle that will implement the new policies. As the key Mongolian school in the provincial capital, it receives the highest amount of fiscal aid to develop, and has the best teaching and learning conditions. And yet, in terms of demographic features outside of school, the city school is in an absolutely Chinese dominant environment with a very weak Mongolian ethno-linguistic environment. Along with the impact of English, the Mongolian language faces challenges to be maintained. The town school and village school are facing the same kind of impact and yet the level is much smaller compared to the level in the city.

Chapter 7

Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will identify different trilingual education models in three chosen Mongolian nationality primary schools and then categorize factors that influence trilingual education models in IMAR into different levels. The principal purposes of the chapter are to answer the three main research questions, which were set out in Chapter 3, and then to discuss the various aspects of the findings of the study in connection with the relevant portrayal of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Finally, some concluding comments will be made.

In this case study, the town and village school implement the same model called the accretive model. But they are different from each other in several aspects. Trilingual education models in IMAR are influenced by the following factors: geographical location, community ethno-linguistic vitality, economic growth, national or local trilingual policy, demographic structure, and teacher-students' attitudes.

In terms of geographical location, the trilingual model is shifting. The accretive model is at a place where geographically it is closer to Mongolia. The balanced model is in the downtown area where they are far away from Mongolia. Some accretive models are found in the area that is closer to other Chinese provinces; however the level of Mongolian is not as good as the Mongolian in the town school, which is close to Mongolia. This shifting pattern also occurs from a low economic growth area to a relatively developed economic area, from a place that is demographically Mongolian-ethnic dominated to Chinese-dominated, and from a place that majorly uses Mongolian as the medium of communication to one where Chinese is the main medium of communication. I divide them into primary factors that are absolutely necessary for the existence of the trilingual model, and secondary factors that decide which model will be implemented.

The tertiary factors are: national or local policy, demographic structure, geographical location and.

The secondary factors are: economic growth, the community's ethno-linguistic environment, and teacher-students' attitudes. However, it is not a simple case of de-coding or mismatching different factors. Comparatively, how strong each factor is over the others also plays a significant role in deciding which model will be implemented in the MNPS. But overall, if we look deep into this phenomenon, as important as these factors are, another important truth is that despite the different models and trilingual education policy, a clear objective is inevitable and hard to ignore. That is, all these policies and implementation serve to assimilate minority to prepare them to enter major society which is the Chinese dominant.

The following sections elaborate upon the features of this explanatory framework and, in doing so, provide detailed answers to the research questions in this study.

7.2 Research Question 1

This question asked:

What are the trilingual education models in MNPS in IMAR?

Overall, there are four types of models implemented in MNPS in IMAR according to Dong's study. But in this study I have confirmed two out of four models. Table 7. 2 provides an overview of the characteristics of the Mongolian nationality schools' three trilingual education models that I found in this study. These findings have proven the accuracy of Adamson and Feng's (2013) minority education models in China. It shows specific examples of two accretive models in town and village level schools, and one balanced model at the city level.

Table 7.2

Models of 3 case schools in this study

Case School	Model	Characteristic	Major factors
City school	Balanced model	Two streams: ethnic language and Chinese. Equal time in the curriculum. English introduced later.	Demographical structure, social economic status (immigrants workers), ethno-linguistic vitality, educational policy
Town school	Accretive model	Strong presence of ethnic language in curriculum and as Medium of Instruction. Chinese introduced at an early stage. English introduced at a later stage.	Geographical location, demographical structure, ethno-linguistic vitality, social economic status, educational and national policy (banned nomad policy)
Village school	Accretive Model	Strong presence of ethnic language in curriculum and as Medium of Instruction. Chinese introduced at an early stage. English introduced at a later stage.	Geographical location, demographical structure, ethno-linguistic vitality, social economic status, educational policy and national policy (urbanization)

All 3 schools focus on nurturing the ethnic minority language. Mongolian in the town and village school communities has very stronger ethno linguistic vitality than the city school's community. Mongolian is used as the major medium of instruction, while Chinese and English is taught as a school subject. These schools have placed their priority on implementing the policy through works at all levels and instructions. Both schools focus on developing student's Mongolian level, while pushing the same intensity of the cultivation of work in Chinese and English. Language proficiency and strengthening the identity of ethnic Mongolian language and cultural have been implemented in parallels.

The city school has two kinds of curriculum for students: the Mongolian and Chinese system. This school also emphasizes on promoting strong Mongolian ethnicity and identity of students who are learning under Mongolian as the MOI system. But the curriculum structure, the school students' structure, and teachers' structure all indicate that this is a balanced model school. About 30% of the students are

non-Mongolian, while 10% of the teaching staff are non-Mongolian.

In terms of language acquisition of the L1, L2, and L3, the questionnaires and interviews show that all three schools meet the required level set by the National Educational Commission. Students experience 5-6 years of compulsory education then are competent to receive middle school education by establishing good comprehensive Mongolian, fluency in Chinese, and basic English abilities. For those students who are in the city or village school, their Mongolian culture studies and vocabulary is not as good as students in the town school that is close to Mongolia.

The most significant difference lies in students' knowledge in the following aspects: Mongolian culture, Mongolian vocabularies, comprehensive reading and writing skills in Mongolian, and basic skills in English. In terms of Chinese reading comprehension and writing, according to teachers' interviews, there are also differences, but not as much as they are in the other two subjects. The city school balanced model produces students with higher abilities in Chinese writing, reading, and speaking, but it is commonly expressed that Mongolian students' Chinese skills are not as good as Han Chinese students at the same grade.

Additive trilingual language education development is not an isolated linear process removed from the cultural, social, economic, and general environment in which it occurs. Nor is it isolated from issues that affect the students' general academic performance. Trilingual education must be 'additive' (characterized or produced by addition) if it is to lead to the positive outcomes that educators aim for, and that have been documented systematically in the case of bilingualism and some forms of bilingual education. Learning an additional language is easier for those who already know a second language than for monolinguals. It is proven in the earlier studies that a positive transfer occurs during the learning from second language learning to an additional language. Skutnabb-Tangas and Toukomaa (1976) proposed the 'threshold level hypothesis' – only when children have reached a threshold of competence in their first language can they successfully learn a second language without losing competence in both languages. The findings from these studies (indicated in table

3.3.3) show that “bilingualism does not hinder the acquisition of an additional language and, to the contrary, in most cases bilingualism favors the acquisition of third languages” (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998, p. 21).

For those the accretive models discussed in this thesis, students learn the other subjects using Mongolian as MOI, for the balanced model students study other subjects through Chinese and learn Mongolian as a subject. In terms of identity education, these schools have laid a clear and solid foundation for ethnic Mongolian students, and exposed them to Mongolian cultural education, while preparing them to enter a Chinese dominant society.

Students in the city, town, and village all think that when they graduate from primary school, they can achieve very good proficiency in spoken Mongolian (mean 4.77), followed by mean of 4.66 showing satisfaction with the progress they are making in spoken Mongolian. Overall, students are very confident that when they graduate they can achieve good proficiency in written English; a mean of 4.43 also indicates that students are very confident that by the graduation their spoken English can also reach very good proficiency. They are happy with the progress they are making now in their spoken English (mean 4.36). They are overall happy with their progress in written English, with a score of 3.51, whereas in written Chinese the mean is as low as 3.08. Their rating of their progress in spoken Chinese is 3.36. This means overall they are happy with the progress in written and spoken Chinese, but they believe their progress in this area can be better. This is lower than their rating of written (3.51) and spoken English (mean of 4.36). When they graduate, these students are still confident that their spoken Chinese will be good, as shown with item 17 at 3.53, but this result is not as high as either Mongolian or English.

The unintended outcomes in terms of students’ trilingualism and empowerment are that Mongolian students’ English testing results are as good as, or better than, Han Chinese students’. This is quite a significant advantage because Mongolian students need to balance their studying time for three languages, while Chinese students only have to manage between two languages.

In general, schooling and education policies have fit into the local needs. But due to the demographic differences, policy differences, economic development diversities, ethno-linguistic environment, the school internal structure differences, and resource distribution differences, different issues have arisen in each school. In terms of outcomes, each school is different. These results are caused by different factors that are shaping trilingual models too. Students acquire L2 and L3 without sacrificing their L1. However, resources distribution, teacher resources, and school conditions makes the school achievement varies among the three schools. Overall students in the town school have the strongest performance in Mongolian knowledge and skills. Students in city school have the highest achievement in English and Chinese in this case.

7.3 Research Question 2

How is additive trilingualism achieved in each model?

This question involves several issues, as this implementation and process of implementation is not a simple case. All three schools have put implementing the educational trilingual policies as their first priority in school management, curriculum design, arranging teaching activities, and assessment process. But in the top-down implementing process, interview shows that at some civil servants corrupt educational fiscal aids or mis- access money needed to develop local schools.

Overall, students and teachers are satisfied with the trilingual education policy and the trilingual education model that is implemented in their schools. This item in the questionnaire scored 2.92. Although agreeing with the trilingual model implemented in their school, an item got the lowest score with 2.29 and an SD of 1.429, indicating that students find it difficult switching from one language to another when studying different subjects in the school. Students feel comfortable to start learning Chinese from grade 2, and rated this item 4.29 with an SD of 1.018. These results are consistent with some suggestion made by teachers about the trilingual teaching

timeframe. But some specific suggestions are made of time allocation for Chinese and English to be introduced to the curriculum. Basically, out of the 79 teachers being interviewed and involved in the questionnaires in the three case schools, most of them suggested to postpone the time to learn Chinese from grade 2 to grade 3, and English to be postponed to from grade 3 to grade 6.

Some teachers and stakeholders in the village school expressed that there is an unfair resource distribution among schools at different places. For example, teachers in the village school suggested adding more fiscal aid, resources, and more hardware teaching equipment to school. Although there are more policies released about aiding minority schools compared with Han schools, the real amount of money that is received by the school is quite a small amount.

The curriculum course objectives and requirements are based on the published National Education Commission's requirements. Teachers' resources and the school's resource structure is distributed based on the needs of the trilingual teaching model. This is reflected not only on school leaders' instructions and guidance to their teaching staff, but also on classroom teaching activities. The assessment system for students and teachers' activities, and learning outcomes, are very similar throughout the three case schools. All these are consistent with national policies. The results show that students' achievements have met the initial requirements set by the National Education Commission.

In terms of the MOI, students feel comfortable with learning English and using English as the MOI, as shown with item 4 scoring 4.76 (SD at 0.785), and learning Chinese using Chinese as the MOI, with item 5 scoring 4.47 (SD at 0.848). Besides these, students wish to learn P.E and art using English as the MOI, as shown in item 19 with the score of 4.68 (SD at 0.641).

In terms of the teaching profile, there are two gaps. One is the gap of not enough minority teachers who can teach English, art, and PE using English as the MOI. The other gap is that many teachers in village schools are too old and about to retire, and

these schools have difficulties hiring new teachers. Teachers and students from all three levels agree that more trilingual teachers are needed because they understand minority students' needs better. More teachers are needed in village schools, as many teachers retire, but there are not many of the younger generation who would like to teach and live in a village. Now the village school has a severe need for young teachers to join them.

Teachers and students wish to build more minority schools, wish to hire more minority teachers, and wish to implement minority education and trilingual education policy more seriously. This requirement and need aims to improve the real situation of teachers' resources. For example, there are not enough minority teachers who can teach English, art, and PE in English.

There are some tendencies and results of trilingual education models that are hard to ignore. Although demographically the Mongolian ethnic population is the largest minority in IMAR, the Han-focused policies and policy implementation still puts the ethnic Mongolians in a relatively disadvantaged situation, compared to the Han Chinese in IMAR. The curriculum development tendency shows that Mongolian is slowly giving in to Chinese. By looking at the sustainability, Chinese is the most widely and frequently used language. The Han dominant ethno linguistic vitality and community in IMAR is very unfavorable of the sustainability of Mongolian and English. Mongol ethnicity and a tendency to assimilate have occurred, especially in terms of speaking the Chinese language and adopting many Han cultural norms (Iredale et al, 2001). More and more accretive models are needed with strong fiscal aid to support them.

Some scholars have divided bilingual education into two major streams: transitional bilingual education and maintenance bilingual education. The former system aims to shift the child from the use of the minority language, to use the dominant majority language, with social and cultural assimilation into the majority language as the underlying aim. On the other hand, the implementations of the accretive model in this

case study share the same characteristics of this theory. The accretive model maintenance of trilingual education aims to foster the minority language in the child, strengthening the child's sense of cultural identity and affirming the rights of an ethnic minority group in a nation (Blake, 2005). Otheguy and Otto (1980) divided maintenance bilingual education into static maintenance and developmental maintenance. The former aims to maintain language skills at the level of a child entering school, while the latter seeks to develop students' home language skills in order to achieve full proficiency and full biliteracy. This is what the trilingual model of balanced model in city level achieved.

The goal of the trilingual education model in the modern Chinese context is to produce trilingual people with specialized knowledge in academic areas, such as technical, scientific, and academic fields. That means minority people who can use Chinese and English to communicate with native speakers, especially specialists and professionals who operate in that language. But the reality is once these minority enter into a Chinese dominant society, compared with Chinese, these minority people are not in a favorable situation, the strong Chinese dominant community also unfavorable to their language to develop and preserved.

7.4 Research Question 3

What are the factors that affect these models?

The trilingual education models, and its implementation, that are studied in these three case schools are only a snapshot of the tensions among the many factors. It is a not simple case of one factor combined with a second factor. None of these factors can exist without interacting and co-existing with one another. Hence, the factors that impact trilingual education models are a complicated issue, as none of these factors are independent variables. Baker (2002) categorized four perspectives of bilingual education: language planning, language politics, economics, and pedagogy.

Accordingly, bilingual education is not only about education, but also a sociocultural

phenomenon. It is related to sociocultural, political, economic, and cognitive development issues. The desire of inheriting, rescuing, maintaining, and enriching the minority language is strong, but the force of modernization and globalization has been constantly and inevitably increasing the gap between the minority and majority.

Markee proposed a framework just for defining the area of curricular innovation in a school context. In his framework, he divided the school context into three levels; primary (teaching or testing materials, methodological skills, and pedagogical values constitute the core dimensions of teaching and learning), secondary (organization itself, managing system), and tertiary (sociocultural and geographical issues) (Markee, 1997). Kennedy also addressed that multiple sociocultural factors potentially interact to constrain classroom innovation. In his model, he pointed out that the cultural values are the most powerful shapers of participants' behavior, followed by political conventions, administrative practices, and so on (p. 55, Markee, 1997).

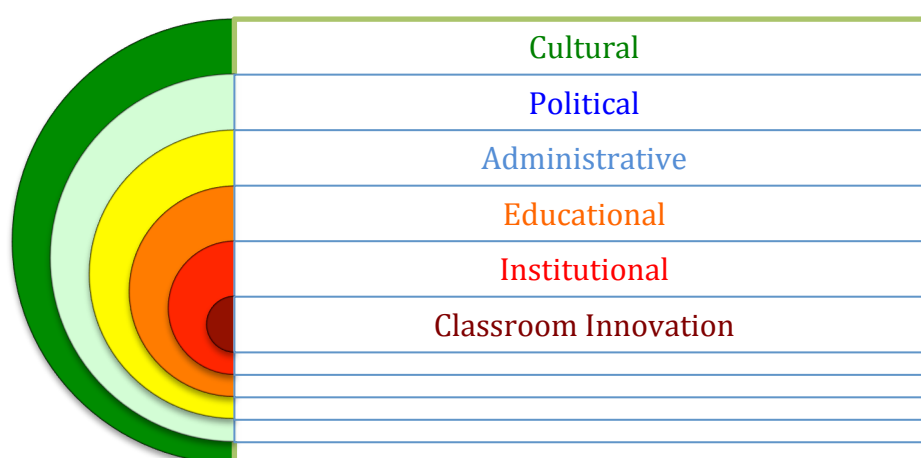


Figure 7.4 The hierarchy interrelating subsystem in which innovations have to operate.
(Reframed from C, Kennedy, 1998, "Education of Management in change in ELT project, "Applied Linguistics" 9 (4), p. 332)

Figure 7.4 shows the hierarchy of interrelating subsystems in which innovations have to operate. This figure shows that the factors impact school curricular innovation. In

his framework, it is also shown that cultural factors, political factors, and administrative and educational culture are top-down in this hierarchy subsystem. Other scholars also addressed the issue when such factors should be considered in the course designing process.

But in my study, I have referred to the framework from Markee (reframed by Tong and Adamson, in Chapter 3) and framework from Kennedy to identify where the most important influential factors are in trilingual educational models in IMAR. Combining with the model shown in Chapter 3 table 3.6.1, I have classified some new factors and categorized them into three different levels. The figure 7.5 is a summarization with adapting figure 3.6.1, in order to group different factors that impact trilingual models at different levels.

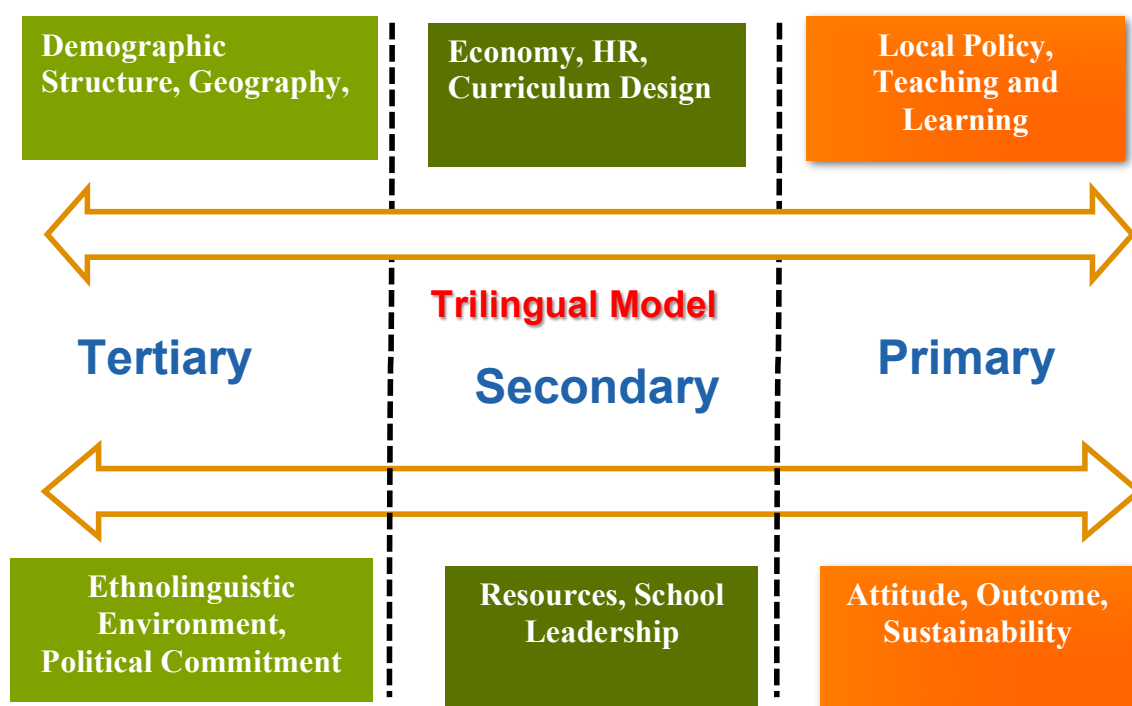


Figure 7.5 *Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Factors that Impact Trilingual Models*

In this thesis, I will show that the tertiary level factors are the most important factors, secondary factors are less important, and primary level is the least important. factors to the trilingual model.

The tertiary factors include the ethnolinguistic environment of the community that is strongly in favor of the minority language, and political commitment that supports the development and protection of minority language learning.

This means that a place where the minority population occupies a larger percentage in the local demography, and the level of political commitment level is high, that place has the most effect on trilingual education models. But the quality and depth of the implementation of the accretive model, or whichever type of model that is implemented, can be impacted by many other factors and issues.

The town school in this case study has the strongest accretive model out of all, and possesses all of the favorable factors, such as: from tertiary level factors perspective, this school has support from national and local policies, geographically close to Mongolia and hence has strong Mongolian cultural influence, the ethno linguistic environment outside of school and in the school are in favor of Mongolian – with relatively good social economic growth status compared to village level – and a stronger ethno linguistic environment for Mongolian than at city level. From the secondary level factors perspectives, this school have strong financial support to develop school conditions and teaching equipment. school leadership and curriculum are implemented around fostering Mongolian as a core value and develop trilingual education..

Although demographically the village school has the most advantages, their accretive model is not as strong as the town level. The main differences are: lower economic growth level, little financial support from the government or local authorities to develop school conditions, further from Mongolia, and closer to other Chinese provinces.

The city level school has implemented a balanced model due to its local demographic structure, and Chinese dominant ethno linguistic environment. But the Mongolian as the MOI system is better implemented here than at village level, due to the city's

strong economic growth status and how it benefits from strong fiscal aid.

The tertiary level factors are the most powerful explanatory level factors. This is because if the demographic structure of the community, the policy, and the geographic location change, we can expect that the trilingual models in schools will also change. This is because the ethno linguistic environment, political commitment, and geographical location are the most influential factors to trilingual education models. The changes of these factors are impacting models and implementation of trilingual education policy. This indicates that the most powerful factors are primary level factors. If the primary factors change, the models change too.

The secondary factors that affect trilingual models are as follows:

Social economic growth status of a place, the human resources structure of teachers and students in a school, school resources, school leadership, and school curriculum design.

In the city school context, The trilingual education model has transformed from an accretive model to a balanced model because of the community change that is basically caused by economic change, human resources differences, and the context and decisions of the school.

The primary level factors include:

Local policies, teaching and learning in classrooms, students, outcomes of students, students, teacher, stakeholders, and parents' attitudes and beliefs toward trilingual education model. These are usually the initial reflectors of how the policies are implemented. However, these factors are not strong enough to change a model to another. But these factors can influence outcomes and implementation of trilingual models as well.

In the city school context, more and more immigrant workers have come to the town and chosen to send their children to this school. Combined with local policy favors, the balanced model is a more popular and practical choice for these children to enter Han Chinese education, and eventually enter a Chinese dominant society. Take the community at the town level in this study, for example; this community has a close connection with Mongolia. Mongolian nomadic lifestyle used to be a dominant industry, so the heritage of Mongolian culture is more complete, comprehensive, and less destroyed compared to the other two schools. However, in all cases, there is no significant demand in the community for using English as a foreign language – it only serves as a purpose for passing exams. Therefore, the community, compared to Chinese and Mongolian, significantly supports English less.

The tertiary level factors that have shaped the model of trilingual education in each school are: an ethno linguistic environment, demographic structure, geographical location, political commitment, and globalization.

This classification is based on the following analysis: The town school is located close to Mongolia. Due to this special geographical location, the local government has invested considerably large amounts of fiscal aid on developing minority education in this school. And the school has already formed its own strong accretive model characteristics; meanwhile, students' outcomes in terms of the three languages are high.

Take the city school, for example; this school is located in the most economically advanced and developed provincial capital of an autonomous region. This city is a Han dominant community, which has laid the foundation for the school to carry a balanced model trilingual education school. While it is clear that there are needs for three languages. there are also needs to balance for the city among three major forces: Chinese policy, minority rights and globalization. The main factor that caused this model is the policy for minority in this city, demographic structure and economic development level of the city. Geographically, the model shifts slowly from an accretive model to a balanced model, due to the distance that the city has with

Mongolia or other Chinese provinces. Economically, the model shifts from the accretive to the balanced model from a relatively low developed area to a well-developed area in IMAR.

The village school is in a place where almost 90% of the population is Mongolian – but geographically, it is close to *Liaoning* province, which is Han Chinese dominant. Although economically this place has not developed as much as either the town or city, but frequent trade exchanges do have an influence over the school's trilingual education model. But this impact is not as strong as the ethno-linguistic vitality and demographic structure's impact. This school implements the accretive model because over 90% of the residents in this village are Mongolian. This community has the need to use and teach Mongolian. But this village school's accretive model outcomes are not as strong as the town school close to Mongolia. The outcomes show that these students' Mongolian vocabulary, reading and writing ability, and their understanding of Mongolian culture is not as good as the town school students'. At the same time, the village school students' English ability is the lowest among the three case schools.

7.5 Conclusion

According to Adamson and Feng (2013), there are four minority trilingual education models in China. They are accretive, balanced, transitional, and depreciative models. According to Dong (2012), there are 4 models existing in IMAR. This study proves the accuracy of 2 models that are mentioned in the previous literature from Adamson and Feng (2013) and Dong (2012). The two models that I find share the characteristics of their definitions of an accretive model and a balanced model.

This study focuses on three schools and has shown an in depth analysis of three schools in terms of their implication of trilingual education policies. Many complications and many challenges of trilingual education development are merged throughout the whole study. Many factors and issues are merged and raised during the study as well.

Another contribution of this study to the literature is to conceptualize and divide different influential factors to trilingual educational models into different important levels. While studying trilingual educational models, one must bear in mind the factors identified in the Chapter 2, Figure 2.6.1, and also bear in mind which factors are the most powerful. But a stereotypical judgment would only focus on the most important and influential factors, which are named the tertiary factors in this study. This would be a misleading assumption, as all the factors, at tertiary, secondary, and primary level, play different roles in shaping trilingual education models and inseparable variables. However, changes in the tertiary level factors can bring big change within trilingual education models. In another words, if the policy and ethno linguistic environment changes then the trilingual education models also change.

Minority language policies in IMAR are meant to support the development of the minority language, and serve to preserve the minority language, but while preparing minority students for further studies and to enter mainstream society. It is inevitable that the minority language is slowly giving way to Chinese. Combined with the strong Han dominant community outside of the schools, minority students are inevitably being assimilated. Mongolian and English are both threatened by the dominant Han Chinese situation. The speed at which Mongolian culture is disappearing, as well as Mongolian literature, art, and traditional customs in IMAR, is faster and severer than one would think.

Mongolian language is well reserved in areas in IMAR where a majority of the population is Mongolian; where the economy is comparatively well developed and geographically close to Mongolia. Whereas at the city level, the tendency of being more assimilated is stronger and inevitable. City level schools apply the balanced model to serve as a goal for social harmony, or to prepare students for a smooth transition into mainstream society. Village level schools as an accretive model are usually not as strong as town schools, it is because these village schools are limited by its economic development level and human resources distributions and other lack of resources supplement shortages, these factors are not powerful enough to decide which models will be implemented in certain schools. Factors at this level, namely,

the secondary level factors can decide to what extent an accretive model is implemented.

During the study the need to make more universities options available to students who learn under the Mongolian as an MOI system also emerged. Because, the real meaning of a successful trilingual education is to produce minority people who not only has their minority language abilities, but also can communicate with Chinese, and English native speakers or other foreign language at a highly proficiency level. The purpose of the education is to foster knowledge, science, medical, media and education knowledge exchange among minority and Chinese and the western world. While minority students learn under trilingual education model to achieve this goal. In the end, what really happen is that not enough options of universities available for them to learn the knowledge. When after *Gaokao* (National University Entrance Exam), there are simply very limited numbers and majors of universities available for minority students to choose from. The crucial purpose of this model meaning education operates a resolve of social glue without costing the Mongolian language. This is the ideal situation, but not the reality. It is because Chinese is becoming more and more dominant in the curriculum in IMAR that Mongolian is more and more assimilated instead of sustained. Trilingual education model and social usage, combine with different factors such as urbanization, job requirements and markets needs for human resources.

There are many limitations to this study. More time can be spent in one case school in order to do longitudinal study. And more schools can be studied in order to give a more holistic picture of trilingual education models in IMAR. I have not got access to many political documents, and my targeted schools are only three schools. However, the data I have collected from these resources are deep enough to support my conclusion in this study. Hereby, I suggest longitudinal research in the rare accretive model schools; these studies can include students who are currently in the schools as well as those who have already entered the society. To what extent does this rare accretive model sustain Mongolian culture? I suggest a pilot project of adding Cyrillic into the curriculum for 2 years, and postpone the timing of English and Chinese in the

curriculum with research on how this model would be implemented in the school, as well as to what extent does this model sustain Mongolian and Mongolian culture. I also suggest for further studies to make comparisons between trilingual education models in IMAR and Mongolia, which would also be an interesting area to explore.

More accretive models need to be implemented in order to encourage the multiculturalism. Otherwise with globalization and fast economic growth, it is inevitable that assimilation will happen; many languages will be threatened or disappears, and be replaced by majority languages.

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Appendix A

Survey on students' perceptions of the trilingual education model in the IMAR

No.	Question 問題	Strongly agree 完全同意	Agree 同意	Neutral 中立	Disagree 不同意	Strongly disagree 完全不同意
1	I find it appropriate to start using Chinese as MOI in Chinese lessons in P2. 我覺得從小 2 開始用汉语學習中文很合適。					
2	I enjoy the trilingual education model implemented in the school. 我喜歡學校的三語教學模式。					
3	I feel comfortable switching from one language to another when studying different subjects in the school. 在學校學習不同科目時在三種語言間轉換對我來說很容易。					
4	I feel comfortable studying the English subject using English as the MOI. 用英文作為教學語言學習英文課程對我來說很容易。					
5	I feel comfortable studying the Chinese subject using Chinese as the MOI. 用中文作為教學語言學習汉语文課程對我來說很容易。					
6	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and English regularly during the study of the English subject. 我在學習英文課程時經常混用蒙古語和英語。					
7	I find myself co-switch between Mongolian and Chinese regularly during the study of the Chinese subject. 我在學習中文課程時經常混用蒙古語和漢語。					
8	I find co-switching in different subjects useful for my language development in general. 總的來說,我覺得在學習不同課程時混用不同語言有助於我的語言能力發展。					
9	I am happy with my progress in the study of written English. 我對自己對書面英文的學習的進展感到滿意。					
10	I am happy with my progress in the study of written Chinese 我對自己對書面中文的學習的進展感到滿意。					
11	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken English. 我對自己對英語口語的學習的進展感到滿意。					
12	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Chinese. 我對自己對 hanyu 語口語的學習的進展感到滿意。					
13	I am happy with my progress in the study of spoken Mongolian. 我對自己對蒙古語口語的學習的進展感到滿意。					

14	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written English. 我很有信心在小學畢業時書面英文達到較高的水準。					
15	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in written Chinese. 我很有信心在小學畢業時書面汉语達到較高的水準。					
16	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken English. 我很有信心在小學畢業時英語口語達到較高的水準。					
17	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Chinese. 我很有信心在小學畢業時汉语口語達到較高的水準。					
18	I am confident that when I graduate I will achieve good proficiency in spoken Mongolian. 我很有信心在小學畢業時蒙古語口語達到較高的水準。					
19	I would like to have P.E and Art to be taught in English. 我希望将来体育和艺术课程用英语授课。					

Appendix B

TRILINGUALISM QUESTIONNAIRE – TEACHERS/HEADTEACHERS (English Version)

We are a group of researchers conducting a research project on trilingual education and trilingualism for minority groups in China. Your understanding of the current practice and views on trilingual education and trilingualism are what we wish to study. We assure you that your personal identity will remain confidential. So, please feel free to give the most honest answers to the questions in this survey. The data collected from this survey will be used for research purpose only.

Part I – Your School and Personal Particulars (Please write short answers or tick the boxes)

- Name and place of your school:
- Total number of pupils in the school:
- Percentage of pupils who are of ethnic minority(ies):
- Is there an ethnic minority group that dominates the pupil population? Yes ☐ No ☐
- If yes, which
- Percentage of pupils who are ethnic Chinese:
- Total number of teachers in the school:
- Percentage of teachers who are of ethnic minority(ies):
- Percentage of teachers who are ethnic Chinese:
- Your Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐ Ethnic background:
- Your position at the school: Principal ☐ Vice Principal ☐ Section/Dept. Head ☐ Teacher ☐ Teaching Assistant ☐ Other. Please specify
- Highest education received:
- Your experience (how many years) as a teacher:
- Which school subject(s) are you teaching?
- Age range: 25 or below ☐ 26 to 35 ☐ 36 to 45 ☐ 46 and above ☐
- Linguistic background:

	Fluent	OK	Limited	No knowledge at all
Minority language				
English				
Other				

Part II – Current Status of Language Education in Your School (Please tick the boxes or write short answers)

1. Does the minority group whose children dominate or attend your school have a written language of their own?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (if no, go directly to 3)

2. Is the written language (L1) of the dominant minority group taught as a school subject in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, in which year(s) is it taught?

3. Is the home language (L1) of the dominant minority group used as the medium of instruction in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, in which year(s) is it used?

Please list the school subject(s) taught in minority language:

4. Is Chinese (L2) taught as a school subject in your school? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, in which year(s) is it taught?

5. Is Chinese (L2) used as the medium of instruction for most or all school subjects in your school?

Yes ỹ No ỹ

6. Is English (L3) taught as a school subject in your school? Yes ỹ No ỹ

If yes, from which year on is it taught?

How many hours/lessons per week?

7. Do you think your school in general attaches sufficient importance to minority pupils' home language and their minority culture?

Yes ỹ Hard to say ỹ No ỹ

8. Do you think your school provides adequate English teaching to minority pupils so that they are not disadvantaged in future higher education and in the job market?

Yes ỹ Hard to say ỹ No ỹ

9. Do you think your school is aiming to assimilate minority children into the mainstream society linguistically by excessively promoting Chinese?

Yes ỹ Hard to say ỹ No ỹ

10. Do you think your school is promoting trilingual education with an effective strategy to develop trilingual pupils who are very competent in their home minority language, Chinese and reasonably competent in English?

Yes ỹ Hard to say ỹ No ỹ 7

Part III – Your Views on Languages and

Language Education (Please read the statement in the left-hand column and circle the number in right-hand column that best reflects your view. 1 = strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Not sure; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree)

Statements	Strongly disagreeStrongly agree
1. The home language of minority pupils is important because it helps them learn school subjects better if they know it well.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Minority pupils should only learn Chinese and use Chinese to learn all other school subjects.	1 2 3 4 5
3. English is too difficult for minority pupils. They cannot learn it as well as Han pupils.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Minority culture here is backward. Minority people generally reject anything foreign including foreign languages.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Minority pupils' IQ is not as good as the IQ of Han pupils. So they learn new languages slowly.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Minority pupils should not be taught English because their main task is to learn Chinese.	1 2 3 4 5
7. If English is taught to minority pupils, they should target a lower level of achievement than that required in the NES (英语新课标).	1 2 3 4 5
8. The language used to teach and learn English, Zhongjieyu (中介语), should be the minority language, not Chinese.	1 2 3 4 5
9. All minority pupils should follow the same syllabuses for Chinese and English as Han pupils, forgetting their minority language.	1 2 3 4 5
10. The key for minority pupils to do well in school is first of all to learn their own language well. They can then learn all other school subjects including Chinese and English equally well.	1 2 3 4 5

Part IV – Your Views on How to Improve Current Practice (Please read the statement in the left-hand column and circle the number in right-hand column that best reflects your view. 1 = strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Not sure; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree)

Statements	Strongly disagreeStrongly agree
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in schools where minority pupils dominate or attend.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in schools where minority pupils dominate or attend.	1 2 3 4 5
3. English language teaching and learning should be further improved in schools where minority pupils dominate or attend.	1 2 3 4 5
4. More English teachers of minority nationality should be employed by minority schools because they know pupils' needs better.	1 2 3 4 5
5. More English teachers of Han nationality should be employed by minority schools because their English is generally better than their minority counterparts.	1 2 3 4 5
6. More hardware such as computers and language labs should be provided for minority schools.	1 2 3 4 5
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that they integrate better.	1 2 3 4 5
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Linguistic assimilation will not work, but serious bi/trilingual education will. So we should promote bi/trilingualism, not assimilation.	1 2 3 4 5
10. Given equal conditions, minority pupils can learn English as well as Han pupils in addition to mastering their own home language and Chinese.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix C

三语教学问卷—校长、老师、主任、班主任 (只供老师使用)

我们是做语言政策研究的一个项目.项目研究包括中国少数民族地区语言政策,少数民族语言,汉语和英语教学.您的观点是我们非常需要和珍惜的信息.我们保证您的私人身份和观点是被完全保密的.所以请真实表达自己观点.此次问卷调查用来作学术研究的.

第一部分：关于您和学校的一些信息和个人详细情况 (请简短填写或打钩√)

学校名称和学校地址：

学校全体学生总数：

少数民族学生占学校学生总数比例：

有没有哪个少数民族占学生总数大部分？是 ☐ 否 ☐

如果有，是哪个民族？

汉族学生占学生总数比例：

学校教师总数：

少数民族老师在贵校比例：

汉族老师在贵校占的比例：

您的性别：男 ☐ 女 ☐ 民族：

您在学校的职务：校长 ☐ 副校长 ☐ 主任 ☐ 班主任 ☐ 教师 ☐ 助教 ☐ 其它职务：...

最高教育：

当教师工作资历：

教授科目：

年龄：25 岁以下 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46 或以上 ☐

语言背景：

	流利	还可以	受限制	毫无知识
汉语				
蒙古语				
英语				
其它				

第二部分：贵校语言教育实施现状 (请打钩√)

1， 在贵校读书的少数民族学生是否有本民族的书写文字体？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

2， 贵校将是否将有书写体的少数民族语言作为一种科目教授？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

如果有教授，从几年级开始教少数民族语言书写体？

3， 少数民族母语是不是贵校授课的媒介使用语言？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

如果是，从几年级开始用母语当中介语授课？

请例举用少数民族母语授课的科目：

4， 汉语在贵校是不是一个科目？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

如果是，汉语是从几年级开始教？

5， 汉语是不是大部分科目的教授中介语言？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

6， 英语是不是贵校的一个科目？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

如果是，英语是从几年级开始教授的？

每个星期几节(小时)英语课？

7， 您觉得您的学校是不是十分重视少数民族学生的母语教学和少数民族文化教育？

是 ☐ 否 ☐

8， 您觉得贵校有向学生提供适当的英语教学，所以这些学生没有落后于他的同龄人或者将来在接受高等教育或者找工作时候也不会因为英语能力相对薄弱而成为弱势群体？

是 ☐ 难说 ☐ 否 ☐

9, 您觉得贵校致力于提高学生汉语水平从而能够让少数民族学生能够更好地融入社会主流。

是☐ 难说☐ 否☐

10, 您觉得贵校是否有一个有效策略或方案提升三语教学效率, 从而培养出具有很强少数民族语言和汉语言能力, 英语能力也相对合理的学生?

是☐ 难说☐ 否☐

第三部分: 您对语言和语言政策的观点(请仔细阅读以下句子并填写右边的表格, 将数字画圈。1=非常反对; 2=反对, 3=不确定, 4= 同意, 5= 非常同意)

观点	非常反对.....非常同意				
1. 母语对于少数民族学生来说很重要, 因为母语能帮助他们学好学校教授的科目。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 少数民族学生应该只学汉语并用汉语学习其他科目。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 英语对少数民族学生来说很难, 他们无法将英语学得跟汉族学生一样好。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 少数民族文化在这里很落后。少数民族人总的爱说很抗拒外语或者外来文化。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 少数民族学生的智商没有汉族学生智商高。所以他们学习语言比较慢。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 少数民族学生不应该学英语因为他们的主要任务是学汉语。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 如果要给少数民族学生教英语, 那么他们的目标要低一些, 至少低于英语新课标的标准。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 教授英语的中介语应该是少数民族母语而不是汉语。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 所有少数民族学生应该依照跟汉族学生同样要求的教学大纲, 忘记他们自己的少数民族语言。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 少数民族学生想做得好, 最重要的是首先要学好自己的母语。然后, 他们能学好其它科目包括汉语和英语。	1	2	3	4	5

第四部分: 怎样提高现状。(请仔细阅读以下句子并填写右边的表格, 将数字画圈。1=非常反对; 2=反对, 3=不确定, 4= 同意, 5= 非常同意)

观点	非常反对.....非常同意				
1. 少数民族教育应该加强, 特别是在少数民族人口占主导的地方和学校。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 应该加强少数民族学生占多数的学校的汉语教学水平。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 应该加强少数民族学生占多数的学校的英语教学水平。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 少数民族学校应该扩招少数民族英语老师, 因为少数民族英语老师更了解少数民族学生需求。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 少数民族学校应该扩招汉族英语老师, 因为他们的英语水平比少数民族英语老师英语水平高。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 少数民族学校应该添加更多硬件设备例如电脑和语言实验室。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 应该提倡建设更多蒙汉学生混合的学校, 这样他们能更好地融合。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 汉族学生和少数民族学生应该用不同的教学大纲, 即使在同一个小学校也应该用不同的教学大纲, 因为他们的学习能力不同。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 同化汉语和少数民族语言不太可能, 但是双语教	1	2	3	4	5

学或者三语教学是可实施的。所以我们应该提倡双语或三语教学，而不是语言同化。					
10.如果提供相同的条件，少数民族学生能像汉族学生一样学好英语，不但如此，少数民族学生也能学好自己的母语和汉语。	1	2	3	4	5

请您写下您的意见和评价.....

.....

.....

.....

谢谢！

Appendix D

TRILINGUALISM QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENTS (English Version)

We are a group of researchers conducting a research project on language education, including minority home language, Chinese and English, for schools dominated by minority pupils in China. Your views on language education are what we wish to study. We assure you that your personal identity will remain confidential. So, please feel free to give the most honest answers to the questions in this survey. The data collected from this survey will be used for research purpose only.

Part I – Something about You and Your School (Please write short answers or tick the boxes)

· Your Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐ Ethnic background:

· Name and place of your school:

· Is the school dominated by children of a minority group? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, which minority group?

· Your age:

· How good are you in these languages:

	Fluent	OK	Limited	No knowledge at all
Minority language				
English				
Other				

5. Do you find that your school attaches sufficient importance to minority pupils' home language and their culture?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Do you find that your school attaches sufficient importance to minority pupils' home language and their culture?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Do you find that the school treat minority pupils in the same way as they do with Han pupils?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If the answer to 6 is No, in what way they are treated differently?

Part III – Your Views on Languages and

Language Education (Please read the statement in the left-hand column and circle the number in right-hand column that best reflects your view. 1 = strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Not sure; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree)

Statement	Disagree...Strongly Agree
1. Minority language teaching and learning should be promoted more seriously in my school.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Chinese language teaching and learning should be further enhanced in my school.	1 2 3 4 5
3. English language teaching and learning should be improved in my school.	1 2 3 4 5
4. More teachers of minority nationality should be employed by my school because they know minority pupils' needs better.	1 2 3 4 5
5. More teachers of Han nationality should be	1 2 3 4 5

employed by this school because they are generally better than minority teachers.	
6. More equipment such as computers and language labs should be provided for my school.	1 2 3 4 5
7. There should be more schools with pupils of mixed nationalities so that we can integrate better.	1 2 3 4 5
8. There should be different syllabuses for Han and minority pupils, even in the same school, because their learning abilities differ.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Minority children should know their own minority language first, then Chinese and English.	1 2 3 4 5
10. Minority pupils cannot learn English as well as Han pupils. So English should be dropped from the school curriculum for them.	1 2 3 4 5

Please write any comments on how to improve the practice of the school you attend:

.....

.....

.....

Appendix E

三语教学问卷—学生

（只供学生使用）

我们是做语言政策研究的一个项目.项目研究包括中国少数民族地区语言政策,少数民族语言,汉语和英语教学.您的观点是我们非常需要和珍惜的信息.我们保证您的私人身份和观点是被完全保密的.所以请真实表达自己观点.此次问卷调查用来作学术研究的.

第一部分：关于您和学校的一些信息（请简短填写或打钩✓）

您的性别: 男☐ 女☐

民族背景:

学校名称:

您的学校是否是少数民族孩子占多数学生人口的学校?

如果是,是哪个民族占主导?

您的年龄:

您以下语言的运用程度:

	流利	还可以	受限制	毫无知识
汉语				
蒙古语				
英语				
其它				

第二部分:您对您的学校了解多少?

1, 您的学校教蒙语么?

是☐ 否☐

2, 您的学校用蒙语语言教一些科目么?

是☐ 否☐

3, 汉语是教学的唯一语言么?

是☐ 否☐

4, 蒙古族学生有英语课么?

是☐ 否☐

5, 您觉得您的学校是蒙古族语言和蒙古族文化有紧密联系么?

是☐ 否☐

6, 您的学校是否对汉族学生和蒙古族学生一视同仁?

是☐ 否☐

如果您对第 6 题的答案是否,您的理由是:

.....
.....
.....

第三部分: 您对语言和语言政策的观点(请仔细阅读以下句子并填写右边的表格,将数字画圈。1=非常反对; 2=反对, 3=不确定, 4= 同意, 5= 非常同意)

观点	非常反对.....非常同意				
1.蒙语语言教学应该在我们学校更加认真地实施。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 汉语语言教学应该在我们学校更进一步开展。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 我们学校英语教学更应该进一步提高。	1	2	3	4	5

4. 我们学校应该招聘更多的少数民族教师，因为他们懂得蒙古族学生的需要。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 我们学校应该招聘更多汉族老师因为他们总体来说比蒙族教师好。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 我们学校应该添置更多的电教设备，如，电脑，语言实验室。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 应该有更多的蒙汉学生混合的学校，这样我们可以更好滴交流。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 应该有不同的教学大纲，因为即使在同一个学校，汉族学生和蒙古族学生的学习能力存在差异。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 蒙古族学生应该先知道自己的蒙古语，然后学中文和英语。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 蒙古族学生不能跟汉族学生那样学好英语。所以，英语应该从课程里撤掉。	1	2	3	4	5

请提出任何提高您所上学校的意见：

.....
.....
.....

请写出您对其它贵校或者少数民族语言的意见

.....
.....
.....

谢谢您的意见！

Appendix F

SCHOOL OBSERVATION SHEET – 1

Classroom Observation

There should be a short interview with the class teacher before or after the observation to complete the questions from 1 to 5.

1. Class Background Data

· School:

· Date: Time period observed:

· Total number of students in the class:

· Gender balance (boys-girls): Age range:

· How many periods do students in this class have for this school subject:

· *Ratio SES (teacher's definition and estimate):

100% from 'well-to-do families' ÿ 70:30 ÿ 50:50 ÿ 30:70 ÿ 100% from 'low income families' ÿ

* Ask Teacher for a rating to collect this information

2. Subject area (English or another school subject) of the time period:

3. Language profile of students in the class

Ethnic background of students:

· What ethnic groups do students belong to by birth:

· Percentage of students who are of ethnic minority(ies):

· Percentage of students who are ethnic Chinese:

The strongest language of the students in this class?

· Percentage of students whose strongest language is minority language:

· Percentage of students whose strongest language is Chinese:

Is the minority language used and/or taught in school? Yes ÿ No ÿ

If yes, how

Is English offered to these students? Yes ÿ No ÿ

If yes, how many periods per week

4. Language profile of the teacher

· Gender: Ethnic background:

· Highest education received:

· Teaching experience (years of being a teacher):

· How many lessons of teaching per week in total:

· Age range: 25 or below ÿ 26 to 35 ÿ 36 to 45 ÿ 46 and above ÿ

· Linguistic background:

	Fluent	OK	Limited	No knowledge at all
Minority language				
English				
Other				

5. Teaching Aim and Textbook used

· What is the aim of the subject taught?

ÿ To meet the national curriculum standards

ÿ To provide basic knowledge less than required by the national standards

Other. Please specify

· Textbook used?

ÿ Standard textbook used nationally

ÿ Textbook specially written for minority students

Other. Please specify

Observation Sheets for the Classroom

Activities in the Classroom:

6. In a classroom where English is taught, how does the teacher handle the class?

Activity	Much (given estimate to time spent or frequency)	Some (given estimate to time spent or frequency)	Little or None (given estimate to time spent or frequency)
Short questions and answers between T & Ps			
Total Physical Response (TPR) activities			
Words and grammar explanation			
Group or pair work (tasks for them)			
Whole class or individual reading aloud Story telling			
Asking students to work on white or black board			
Audio/Video listening or watching			
Other. Specify			

7. What seems to be the major approach the teacher uses in the classroom? (could tick more than one)

☐ Communicative language teaching approach (many oral interactions focusing on students' oral skills)

☐ Task-based, student-centred language teaching approach (many group or individual tasks for students to complete using the target language)

☐ Grammar-translation language teaching (mainly explanations of language knowledge)

☐ Others. Specify

8. In a classroom where English is taught, how do the students respond to the activities?

Activity	Majority do well with interest	Majority manage, but with difficulty	Majority show no interest and get lost
Short questions and answers between T & Ps			
Total Physical Response (TPR) activities			
Words and grammar explanation			
Group or pair work (tasks for them)			
Whole class or individual reading aloud Story telling			
Asking students to work on white or black board			
Audio/Video listening or watching			
Other. Specify			

In a classroom where a school subject other than English is taught, the teacher gives explanations:

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ Notes

In a classroom where English is taught, the teacher interacts with the students:

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ Notes

10. Language(s) used by the students:**In a classroom where English is taught, the students interact with the teacher:**

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ In mixed languages including English (Chinese, English and minority language)

☐ All or predominantly in English

☐ Notes

In a classroom where English is taught, the students interact with each other in group work:

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ In mixed languages including English (Chinese, English and minority language)

☐ All or predominantly in English

☐ Notes

In a classroom where a school subject other than English is taught, the teacher gives explanations:

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ Notes

In a classroom where English is taught, the teacher interacts with the students:

☐ All or predominantly in minority language

☐ All or predominantly in Chinese

☐ In mixed languages (Chinese and minority language)

☐ Notes

11. Classroom hardware

Aspects	Very good	Not too bad	Very poor
Classroom size			
IT Equipment			
Furniture			
Brightness			
Others. Specify			

12. Effectiveness of Lesson Observed

Aspects	Points of good practice	Points for consideration
Clarity of objectives		
Planning and organisation		
Methods/ approach		
Delivery and pace		
Content (currency, accuracy, relevance, use of examples, level, match to students' needs)		
Students' participation		
Use of space and learning resources		
Teacher's competence in the target language		