

Title of paper: How adult educators' positionality impact the learners in the literacy programs for foreign spouses in Taipei County, Taiwan.

□ An empirical study in working (planned to be completed in January, 2014)

As Cervero and Wilson pointed out "adult education has a significant role in the distribution not only of knowledge but also of social, economic, and political power. We can no longer believe that adult education is a neutral activity in this continual struggle for knowledge and power (Cervero, Wilson, & Associates, 2001, p. xv). All Taiwanese adult educators of adult literacy programs should be aware of how their ethnicity, class, and gender have impact on the learners who are Southeast Asian married to Taiwanese men. Originated from the same Asian district, as one of the four economic dragons, most Taiwanese own a sense of "higher" class in than the rest of Asians, for example, who are from Thai, Vietnam, Indonesia, Mainlanders, or Philippines. As the Taiwanese teachers in an adult literacy program, the purpose of this study is to understand how their positionality play a role in the learning and teaching environment when the learners are Southeast Asian women.

According to the statistic between year 2001 to 2012, there have been from 16% to 33% of Taiwanese men marry non-Taiwanese Southeast Asian women due to the marriage squeeze and marriage gradient. These Southeast Asian wives are called "foreign wife" or "foreign spouse" in the very beginning of their mass presence in Taiwan about a decade ago. These two terms of "foreign wife" or "foreign spouse" had been considered of the discrimination on this group, "new immigrant women" or "new resident women" were suggested as more and more scholars embarking research upon these wives. 90% of them are drop-outs from high school and 30% of them are illiterate in the statistic of year 2007. While the stereotypes of motherhood such as caretakers and educators in traditional Taiwanese family perpetuating, significant amount of research have revealed that students performances were poor in school if the mothers are "new immigrant women". Therefore the government established adult literacy programs within public primary and secondary schools to educate "the new immigrant women" and be a good mother at home.

Since these public schools have day school students from first graders to 12 graders, adult literacy programs are provided during the night so these wives can come and learn after their work. The teachers of programs are currently teaching at the same day school and mostly are women with few men. My research focus is to understanding how the adult educators' race, class and gender guided or influenced their teaching when their learners are homogeneously from underdeveloped Southeast Asia countries. Three research questions developed in this study. 1) How the Taiwanese adult educators see their own and the "new immigrant women" learners' positionality in the teaching and learning; 2) How Taiwanese adult educators deal with stereotypes of "new immigrant women" learners raised by the society in Taiwan? 3) What power dynamics emerged in their teaching?

The sample for this qualitative study will be comprised of six Taiwanese adult educators who were/are teaching adult literacy programs for new immigrant spouses (in fact all of them are wives only). Two male teachers and four female ones will be interviewed by using a semi-structured interview guide. These participants' teaching location is in Taipei County where the most new immigrant wives in Taiwan reside and where the first adult literacy programs offered. Analyzing and

interpreting qualitative data is a process of intense immersion in the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials the researchers have collected. I have been keeping and organizing these materials into salient themes and patterns so that the themes conveyed a consist story. In qualitative research, analysis begins simultaneously with the study and is initiated at the conceptualization stage. The research questions, the strategy for the research and the design, and the genre to which my study links: all these provided preliminary results for my analysis. Decisions made in the field focused the analysis as I am discovering important but unanticipated ideas and shift emphasis in the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). All field notes and transcripts from digital recorder interviews have been prepared for analysis by first photocopying all the row data, and then identifying categories of meaning in the data. These categories of meaning then organized into different tables for easy manipulation during data analysis. Constant comparative method was used as the method of data-analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002).

There has been increasing attention paid to how learner's and educator's positionalities affect learning in classrooms, although there has been more focus on the learner than on the educator. Maher and Tetreault (2001) in their book *The Feminist Classroom* introduced positionality in the context of formal and informal learning environments. Positionality can also be defined as metaknowledge, locating the self in relation to others within social structures, such as the classroom, that re-create and mediate those relationships. They described that, "positionality refers to the idea that "people are defined not in terms of fixed identities, but by their location within shifting networks of relationships, which can be analyzed and changed" (p. 164). While always defined by gender, race, class, and other significant dimensions of societal domination and oppression, positionality is also always evolving, context-dependent, and relational, in the sense that constructs of maleness create and depend on constructs of femaleness, while blackness and the term "of color" are articulated against ideas of whiteness(Maher & Tetreault, 2001).

Although the race issues are not as salient as they are in the states than they are in Taiwan, as a multicultural society, there have been a lot of attentions paid to study the students whose mothers are from Southeast Asia. This is rather an ethnicity issue which Taiwanese ethnocentrism did play a role in adult educator's teaching in the adult literacy programs. Therefore, this study will add to the literature on research of the educator in additional to the done research on both new immigrant women and their children as learners. Tisdell, Hanley, and Taylor (2000) addressed adult education practitioners as embodying sundry social locations and positionality (race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability) and implementing these theoretical frames in practice in quite different ways. For Taiwanese adult literacy educators and new immigrant women learners whose positionality (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and/or disabilities) shape how classroom dynamics unfold and how knowledge is constructed in a learning environment. They conceived that these differences in practice are based in part on differences in positionality. The positionality of how the educator shapes teaching and learning for critical consciousness will adequately be explored.