

Symposium Proposal

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Ideology and Pedagogy Under Political and Socio-Cultural Transitions: The Evolution of Moral Education and History Curriculum in Taiwan

In an era marked by rapidly changing global political and economic conditions, conflicts and tensions among different nations, cultures, and social groups continue to affect world peace and social stability. Against this backdrop, reflecting on how sociocultural and political ideologies shape curriculum and pedagogical practices—and, consequently, the values and worldviews of future generations—has become an important area of educational inquiry. This symposium examines the Taiwanese educational experience as a case study to explore the complex relationship among political ideology, sociocultural transformation, curriculum development, and classroom teaching. Over the past century, Taiwan has undergone multiple waves of political, cultural, and social change, including Japanese colonial rule, authoritarian governance under Martial Law, democratization, and the emergence of a pluralistic democratic society. Each historical period has profoundly influenced curriculum content, educational discourse, and teachers' pedagogical practices. Drawing upon the historical development of moral education and history/civics education in Taiwan, this symposium aims to provide insights for the international educational community regarding how curriculum and teaching are shaped by broader sociopolitical transformations. The symposium comprises four papers on moral education, character education, history education, and curriculum studies. The abstracts are presented below.

1. The Evolution of Moral Exemplars and Character Traits in Taiwan's Moral Education Curriculum: From the Japanese Colonial Period to the Present

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This study investigates the historical transformation of moral exemplars and their associated character traits in Taiwan's moral education curriculum from the Japanese colonial period (1896–1945), through the authoritarian regime era (1945–1987), to the contemporary democratization period (1988–present). The study adopts the approaches of the German historian Reinhart Koselleck and the sociologist Niklas Luhmann, particularly their work on conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*), to analyze how and why particular moral exemplars and character traits emerged in moral education curricula and how these concepts were transformed across different historical periods. The analyzed materials include moral education textbooks, curriculum standards, curriculum guidelines, legal documents, and other educational texts from the colonial era to the present democratization period. The findings indicate that over the past 130 years, moral exemplars and their associated character traits within Taiwan's moral education curriculum have undergone continual transformation in response to changing political and social contexts. The study further demonstrates how textbooks functioned as important vehicles for disseminating and institutionalizing these concepts within Taiwanese society during different historical periods. Moreover, as mass media and digital communication have become increasingly influential in contemporary society, the moral authority and educational influence of school-based moral exemplars have gradually become more decentralized during the period of democratization. Overall, this study reveals that the construction and transformation of moral exemplars and character traits are deeply embedded within broader political, cultural, and social changes.

Keywords: moral exemplars; character traits; moral education curriculum; Taiwan; conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*)

2. The Challenges of Sociocultural Transformation to Taiwanese Elementary School Teachers' Moral Education Beliefs and Pedagogical Practices: An Analysis from the Martial Law Era to the Democratization Period

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This study explores how Taiwanese elementary school teachers who grew up under different political and sociocultural contexts developed distinct moral education beliefs, curriculum designs, and pedagogical approaches, and how these orientations have been

challenged and reshaped by sociocultural transformation. To clarify generational differences and adaptation strategies among teachers, this study proposes to conduct interviews with nine elementary school teachers who were raised during three different historical periods in Taiwan: (1) the Martial Law era, (2) the transitional period following the lifting of Martial Law, and (3) the democratization period. The study expects to find that teachers who grew up under different sociopolitical conditions developed distinct moral beliefs, core values, and teaching approaches shaped by the “spirit of the age” (*Zeitgeist*) of their formative years. Consequently, they encounter different educational challenges and adopt different strategies of pedagogical adaptation in response to social and cultural change.

Keywords: moral education; Taiwan; Martial Law era; democratization; curriculum and pedagogy

3. The Intersecting Influence of Character Education and the Hidden Curriculum among Junior High School Chinese Language Teachers across Generations in a Pluralistic Society

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This study examines how Taiwanese junior high school Chinese language teachers, who were raised in different political and sociocultural contexts, have had their personal values and educational beliefs shaped by the political ideologies and social values of different historical periods. The study further explores how these influences become embedded within the hidden curriculum and interact with classroom teaching practices, thereby shaping the content and values conveyed through Chinese language education. To investigate this process, the study proposes to conduct interviews with nine junior high school Chinese language teachers who grew up during three distinct historical periods: the Martial Law era, the transitional period following the lifting of Martial Law, and the democratization period. The study seeks to understand the interrelationship among teachers’ moral beliefs, core values, curriculum design, and pedagogical practices across generations. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide valuable insights for both Taiwanese and international scholars and practitioners concerned with moral education, curriculum studies, and teacher education in pluralistic societies.

Keywords: Chinese language teachers; Taiwan; curriculum and pedagogy; Martial Law era; character education

4. Transformations in Knowledge Selection in History Textbooks under Curriculum Reform: A Comparative Analysis of Junior High School History Textbooks in Taiwan

Presenter: Yi-Zong WU

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This study examines the transformation of the concept of “nation” and national identity in Taiwanese junior high school history textbooks under two major curriculum reforms: the 2003 Grade 1–9 Curriculum Guidelines and the 2018 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines. The study proposes a three-layer co-constructive model—consisting of the political environment, curriculum framework, and textbook review system—to theorize the mechanism of knowledge selection in a transitional society. Methodologically, the study adopts Reinhart Koselleck’s conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) as its primary analytical framework and incorporates his approach to the “four dimensions of conceptual transformation.” In addition, content analysis and textual analysis are employed to compare two editions of Kang Hsuan junior high school history textbooks across eight analytical subcategories from political and cultural perspectives. The findings suggest that changes in Taiwanese history textbooks cannot be understood merely as internal textual revisions; rather, they result from the interaction among political transformation, curriculum frameworks, and textbook review mechanisms. The proposed model contributes to understanding how the legitimacy of knowledge is continuously reconstructed within transitional societies and may also provide a comparative framework for other East Asian societies experiencing democratization and identity reconstruction.

Keywords: curriculum reform; textbooks; conceptual history; democratization; history education