

出國報告（出國類別：考察）

故事文法對口說表現的影響

服務機關：應用外語系/所

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報告日期：100 年 09 月

出國時間：100 年 07 月 02 日至 10 日

目次

摘要.....	3
過程.....	4
心得.....	5
建議事項.....	6
參訪照片.....	6
論文摘要.....	12
論文.....	13
受邀證明.....	44

摘要

本次參與由 IRSL 所舉辦的第二十屆兒童文學國際研討會是為了要討探兒童文學及故事繪本在學習英語為第二外語時的影響。語言的學習不單單只是學習語言，更是學習一種文化。所以，此次參訪的目的是希望透過故事的方式來學習英語，同時，也能讓學生透過不一樣的方式來感受文化間的差異及不同的社會觀點。此次的參訪讓我見識到各個國家的學者用不同的角度去探究兒童文學，也能了解雖然我們處在世界的各地，但我們都為兒童文學及教學上貢獻自己的一份心力。每位學者所提供的論文或是故事繪本，都呈現了每個國家的多元文化，也間接呈現了值得探討的社會現象。最後，希望藉由閱讀故事繪本的管道，來加深及擴展學生的思維，並更深入的了解故事背後的文化意涵。

一、目的

本次參與第二十屆兒童文學國際研討會的目的在於了解各國對兒童文學及故事繪本對語言學習的影響。

二、過程

搭乘七月二日新加坡航空的班機出發，於新加坡機場轉機，於七月三日時抵達澳洲布里斯本。隔日，在註冊手續後，隨即和其他的學者簡單的寒暄了一下，並互相交流對兒童文學的看法。約略中午時，所有學者參與了由 IRSCCL 所舉辦的歡迎會。這次的歡迎會特地請到原住民帶來當地的原住民之舞，以表示對所有學者的歡迎及感謝，同時，也為第二十屆的兒童文學國際研討會揭開序幕。

七月四日下午參加了由昆士蘭大學的 Gillian Whitlock 教授所主講的 *The refugee child: From the archive to the page*，接著又參加澳洲學者 Chloe Killen, Kelly Oliver, 及 Debra Dudek 的座談會，在一連串的行程結束後，不僅可以更了解澳洲學者對於澳洲兒童文學的見解及在傳統中所做的創新，另外，更可以看到與台灣學者不同的觀點，著實令我獲益良多。

七月五日，同樣是分上、下午的研討會，這次的國際研討會分成同時在不同的會議室所舉行，所以可以選擇自己有興趣的主題到現場去聆聽簡報。今天特地去聽了一場由台灣台東大學的蔡秀君教授所發表的論文，題目為 *Exploring through the Darkness: Subverting Family Food in Gaiman's Coraline*，這篇論文所要傳達的是在兒童文學中，食物佔了不可或缺的角色，如：父母親會用食物來表示對小孩子的關愛或是引誘小孩子去從事一些他們原本不願意做的事，像是完成作業或是幫忙做家事，這時，食物就被用來當成讓小孩子妥協的工具，小孩子會因為想要得到餅乾或是糖果，而表現出令父母親滿意的行為。這些看似平常不過的行為，或是父母及老師會利用到的小手段來控制孩子，當它出現在兒童文學中，不僅讓讀者意識到食物所扮演的角色，同時，也賦予了文學更多的親和力。

七月六日，這天來到了的藝廊參觀 Shaun Tan 的作品展覽「The Art of Story」，

他不僅是位有名的插畫家，更是榮獲了瑞典兒童文學大獎，這次的作品展以「The Lost Thing」為主軸，這部片更是贏得了 2011 年奧斯卡最佳動畫短片。能夠親眼看到 Shaun Tan 的親筆手稿，真是不虛此行。除了展覽的內容讓我大開眼界外，澳洲人對於藝廊的設計也是別具特色。不論是藝廊的空間設計或是作品呈現的感覺，都是希望能夠營造親近觀眾的氛圍，這不僅讓觀眾能夠輕鬆自在的沈浸在文學作品中，更重要的是，兒童文學不再是如此地有距離感或是難以理解。

七月七日及七月八日分別參加了台灣學者的座談會，其中一個是探討同性戀在兒童文學中所帶來的影響。的確，試想若在國小的班級中出現了一位同性戀學生，學生的反應會是如何?這也和前陣子吵得沸沸揚揚的新聞不謀而合，是否該在小學課程中教導同性戀議題，但可想而知的是，同性戀的傾向會讓小學生對於性別感到混淆，而性別不平等的現象因而產生。當一個孩子有著男生的外貌，但內心卻是如女孩般的細膩，所以他喜歡的對象可能轉變成男生，但一般孩童卻對這種現象無法理解，覺得男生就是喜歡女生，行為舉止也應該像個男生，這時，當表現出的行為不如大眾所預期，言語恐嚇，甚至是肢體暴力就出現了。這種議題不論是在兒童文學或是在真實的教育現場裡，都應該要特別地小心處理。

而我的主題則是跟大學生的故事創作有關。不難發現，大學生所創作出的故事中，仍被傳統的價值觀及意識形態所束縛著，較難跳脫出原有的思維模式而延伸出新的想法或是架構。這似乎也意味著，平時所接觸的閱讀刊物或是學校課程會影響學生的創意來源，若能大量及廣泛的閱讀或是激發/鼓勵學生的創意，則會帶來不同的結果。

三、心得

在經過幾天的文學薰陶下，不僅身心得到短暫的休息，更是來了一趟知識的充電之旅。這次的參訪，可以感覺到 IRSCL 非常用心地策備這次的國際研討會，先是讓各國的學者有短暫的時間相互認識，又安排了多元的座談會，也讓我們親眼見識到 Shaun Tan 大師的作品。就學術而言，可以和大家互相切磋交流，是一

個非常難得的經驗。而其他台灣的學者們，包括我，也向世界展現了我們對故事繪本方面的創新及遠見。最值得一提的是，我可以帶著滿滿的收穫回到台灣，繼續在我的教學崗位上努力，讓我的學生可以在我的教學下，讓他們的語言學習有不一樣的樂趣。

四、建議事項

在參訪過程中，和其他國家學者交流後才發現，他們此趟行程的費用是由國家全額補助。相較之下，我國在研究方面的國外差旅費的補助明顯地不足，再加上先前出國參訪的經驗，光是機票加上飯店住宿費用，經費剩餘的費用幾乎所剩無幾，有時甚至自己還要負擔超額的部分。所以，在此誠摯地希望教育部能在學術方面的研究經費上提供較足夠的資助。

五、參訪照片





熱情的原住民舞蹈歡迎各國學者的參與



午餐饗宴



展覽中的作品



擔任座談會的主席



論文發表



論文發表

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**Forever Cinderella and Confucius: Gender Ideology and
Cultural Values in College Students' Creative Narratives for
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Abstract

Gender ideology and cultural values presented in children's books and retold stories have been examined extensively in the study of children's literature to challenge the prescribed gender roles and social values. Post-modern picture books embody this conceptual challenge and provide a different reading experience to young readers. However, to what extent the scholarly discussion and the new texts have influenced young minds is a less discussed topic. To further examine the extent of gender ideology and cultural values held by the younger generation in Taiwan, instead of studying published works by professional writers, 54 picture book stories created by college students in my children's literature class were analyzed. It was found that didactic discourse was adopted by most of the student writers when taking the role of a writer to create stories for children. Traditional values were still held firmly and social harmony and interpersonal relationships were highly valued. Gender ideology detected in the stories reflected the traditional stereotypes that gave more power to men in gender relationships and devalued external beauty while still presenting it as a favorable female attribute. Moral teaching was found in almost all the stories; however, new perspectives were found that represented non-dichotomy moral reasoning and a touch of feminist Confucianism.

Key words: creative writing; gender ideology; cultural values; Confucianism.

Forever Cinderella and Confucius: Gender Ideology and Cultural Values in College Students' Creative Narratives for Children

Gender ideology and cultural values presented in children's books and retold stories have been examined extensively in the study of children's literature. Some modern stories, particularly post-modern picture books, have provided critical views to challenge the prevalent assumptions of gender roles and prescribed social values as discussed in Kathleen O'Neil's paper (2010). I assumed, at least in my children's literature class where a great number of post-modern picture books had been introduced and discussed, that young people might have a more critical perspective on gender relationship and social norms or beliefs since many traditional preconceptions had been challenged in the class. Moreover, the young generation in Taiwan has grown up with Taiwan's political and economical changes as the ideas of globalization or Westernization have made conceptual impacts on our collective society where new concepts or values that are similar to those of individualism have been partially and gradually adopted. However, my preliminary observations depict a different scenario. The young people in the study seemed to align themselves with traditional didactic discourse when taking the role of a writer to create stories for children. Moral teachings coated by seemingly interesting narratives were evident while gender ideology was not hard to find.

It seemed that when these college students were required to write for children, an inconspicuous sense of preaching through stories was aroused and moral teaching was taken as a safe way to project themselves as adults, who should impart appropriate social values to their juniors. In other words, the fundamental beliefs and values on

which their society is based were clear to them; naturally, like many writings, the social ideology they had adopted was also unintentionally inscribed in their narratives. To further examine the extent of gender ideology and cultural values held by the younger generation nowadays in Taiwan, instead of studying published works by professional writers, whose creative process or product is oftentimes influenced by market demands or publishers' agendas and thus may present modified values different from those of the writers themselves, I analyzed 54 picture book stories created by the college students in my children's literature class from the year 2006 to 2010. Those drafts, uncensored by and insensitive to market values, could reveal beliefs shared by the young people and thus might be decoded to show the underlying ideology and values subscribed by them. The analysis was supplemented with brief comparisons between the published works and the students' works if similar storylines or topics were found, which might provide not only a glimpse of how the young minds perceived traditional values but also the cross-cultural differences presented in similar story constructions.

Transforming Confucianism

After going through social and political changes and currently engaging itself in globalization, Taiwan's traditional cultural values, founded mainly in Confucianism, have been challenged for its emphasis on social conformity and hierarchy that devalue individuality and gender equality. At least in Taiwan, where modernity is achieved through its open market policy and frequent contact with the world, the changes of social values or gender roles entailed by modernity have been a concern of research across sociology, psychology, and cultural studies, and most results suggest that the changes may not be as drastic as one could have expected. For instance, in an earlier

study, Kwang-Kuo Hwang (1995) finds that most traditional core values of Confucianism and the *Ru* School remain unchanged with time. Education and knowledge are still highly valued although Western rationalism is incorporated and morality has been redefined with scientific and objective reasoning.

Apart from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China are also firm about traditional Confucian values. Yuan-Duen Li's comparative study (1998) investigates the values held by college students from Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan and explores whether new perspectives have been brought to old values among young people in these regions with similar Chinese cultural heritages. He concludes that while social and gender equality is pursued, filial piety remains as a core family value and maintaining harmonic interpersonal relationships is still underscored as a main social value.

The traditional values stand firm even to cross-cultural influences when people emigrate to foreign lands. According to Hsu and Yeh (2006), traditional gender ideology on work types and places that separate women from public affairs in Confucius' time is not being dissipated with Western influences when their Taiwanese participants move to a Western country. In particular, changes in values are not found in the choices they make for academic majors and prospective spouses. Men seem to choose majors that accord with the traditional masculine fields of study such as engineering and science while women lean toward liberal arts. Men will choose prospective spouses from the same cultural and racial background to prevent possible conflicts with their parents while females are more open for foreign spouses. It seems that the concept of gender equality has been adopted and women seem to enjoy more liberty at least in choosing their prospect spouses than men, who are still burdened with traditional expectations or pressure to carry on the family name and thus their autonomy in choosing marital partners is constrained.

This kind of parental pressure or expectation on children in fact is authorized by Confucius' teaching of filial piety that requires children to be thoroughly obedient. Although parenting styles have changed in modern society and parents might have loosened their grips, the power is still withheld even by younger parents, who are expected to be more democratic in their parenting styles. For instance, Hui-Fen Lin (2004) finds that most young mothers she interviewed only give limited autonomy to their children and prefer to direct their children to the "right" track to ensure that they will learn values similar to their own. Lin argues that child autonomy is a concept borrowed from Western cultures, not existing in Confucianism, and thus merely adopting the concept is to imitate the formal practice without solid developmental experience and social conditions to support the practice.

The above-mentioned studies reveal a very solid tradition and beliefs rooted in Confucius' teaching, which has been followed and politically channeled into a core value system of Chinese society with far-reaching influence in both private and public spheres. Two major beliefs revealed in Yee-Jing Chen's study (2003), for instance, illustrate a social mentality on success rooted in Confucianism and may explain why diligence is constantly referred to as a Chinese personality characteristic. Chen analyzes the textbooks used in public schools and finds that the ideas of *you can't get anything for nothing* and *where there is a will, there is a way* remain as the two major beliefs for being successful, which Chen argues does not reflect the reality in which social economic status and educational background seem to play a more important role in the chance of success than determination and aspiration.

Although not much change has been perceived in traditional values, the influences of Western cultures and values are by no means imperceptible. Modern society does give more room for individuality, which is reflected in young

people's "private-sphere morality" that seems to overshadow the "public" one (Wu & Chow, 2009). The core values of Confucianism in social harmony may not be as vital to young people nowadays. For Confucianism, to achieve interpersonal harmony is considered the ideal personhood, and if necessary, intimate relationships between husband and wife can be sacrificed for social harmony. The notorious bureaucracy of *Guanxi* can also be traced to the influence of Confucian social harmony. However, as individualism seeps into young people's lives through any forms of cultural exchanges, the vital position of social harmony may need to compromise with the need for self-realization. In fact, research has found that people in Taiwan have developed a "compromised self," which is not either altruistic self sacrifice for social harmony nor self fulfillment of individualism. It is a compromised understanding that while heeding the needs of others, self needs should also be valued and expressed (cited from Chen & Wu, 2008).

For gender ideology, the impact of feminism on traditional values or beliefs rooted in Confucianism is destined to be modified, i.e., Confucius's discriminative comments on women and his influences on gender segregation in particular. Indeed, the modern study of Confucius's philosophy has striven to clear Confucius's reputation in gender segregation and women's degradation, or at least argue that Confucianism is not the sole blame for women's oppression in China. Confucius's attitude toward women's roles and some notorious passages in his Analects that exclude women from participating in the political arena or claim that women are hard to deal with were reinterpreted with traditional practices and beliefs long before his time (Li, 2000).

Instead, Confucianism can be applied as a culturally sensitive framework to validate a different womanhood in the third world, in which Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee

(2006) denotes as being a diverse liberation process of women in China. Rosenlee parallels the central virtue of *Ren* in Confucian philosophy that foregrounds the ideal personhood in the relationship with others and the fundamental concern of humanity with the spirit of feminism. That is, self-cultivation and personal achievement can only be fulfilled by maintaining a caring and reciprocal relationship with others. Thus, instead of searching for a complete “individual self” or self-realization that is based Western gender study, Rosenlee proposes a “relational self” as an “ethical ideal” that prioritizes human relations and the complementary roles of gender. She suggests that by modifying the gender labor division of *Nei* (inside) and *Wei* (outside) in Confucianism, the territorial boundary that segregates men and women and limits women’s achievement in men’s territory can be removed.

Chen-Yang Li (2000) holds a similar interpretations of Confucianism and argues that “Confucianism may be modified to accord with contemporary feminist moral sensibilities” (p. 13). A strong enquiry used to exemplify the alignment of Confucianism with feminism is Carol Gilligan’s psychological study (1982) on the development of female morality. In her book, *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan challenges Kohlberg’s divided moral development in which women’s moral reasoning or understanding seems inferior to men’s or cannot be specified in the moral domain where people mature from self-interested fairness to universal justice and equality. She proposes a feminine moral reasoning based on care, selflessness, and endeavoring to maintain social connections and relationships. This feminist care ethics corresponds to the Confucian pivotal philosophy of *Ren*, which stresses the virtue of care for others in maintaining harmonic social relations. Confucian scholars argue that women’s oppression under the teaching of *Ren* in fact should not have happened had it not been for a different doctrine, i.e., *yin* and *yang*, which places

different attributes to males and females and gives the male a dominating role over the female. Besides, the *yin-yang* philosophy is not addressed in Confucius' Analects and was not integrated until later. They further clarify that the original *yin-yang* doctrine stresses more the complementary features of the genders rather than the discriminative ones (Li, 2000). As Wei-Ming Tu (1998) argues,

The Confucian wife is known for her forbearance, but her patient restraint is often a demonstration of inner strength. While her purposefulness may appear to be overtly and subtly manipulative, she has both power and legitimacy to ensure that her vision of the proper way to maintain the well-being of the family prevails; for the wife is not subservient to the husband, but is his equal. (p. 133)

However, Joel J. Kupperman (2000) argues that the central idea of Confucius's teaching on social harmony in fact fortifies the social hierarchy and facilitates the forming of the sense of self and other. The differentiated social roles are internalized as individuals, either man or woman, are prescribed proper manners to enact the expected roles and perceive the entailed responsibilities. The differentiated social roles in gender are what modern feminists such as Diana Meyers and Simone de Beauvoir strive to reform. Kupperman warns that to eliminate the undesired constraints of social and gender roles, one needs to also be careful not to eliminate the desired and positive feminine characteristics such as sensitivity and empathetical reasoning. He also suggests that Confucian ethics of the self, family and social relationships can be reformulated by ridding the traditional strain of undesired gender differentiation.

These augmentations though are carefully established and may only remain as a scholarly discourse for the time being. To what extent it will reshape the traditional mentality is yet to be explored. In reality, the improvement of gender equality and the “compromised self” by any means may have gradually modernized Confucianism by keeping the core values of filial piety, reducing the weight of social harmony, and eliminating gender segregation. However, for young readers, a direct contact with reading texts that give them different and critical viewpoints to perceive traditions or stereotypes may influence them more than those scholarly argumentations, in particular the postmodern picturebooks. With their fresh and sometimes controversial ways of storytelling, postmodern picturebooks can help construct appropriate and meaningful class discussions related to social and interpersonal issues (O’Neil, 2010).

In my children’s literature class, postmodern picturebooks have been introduced year after year to draw the students’ attention to gender and sociocultural issues. Babette Cole’s picturebooks such as *Princess Smartypants* (1997), Jon Scieszka’s *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* (1989), and John Marsden and Shaun Tan’s *Rabbits* (2003), Tan’s *The Lost Thing* (2000), and most of the books introduced in O’Neil’s study had been included. These stories successfully stimulate in-depth discussions on female agency, multiple angles on viewing the same incident, and also multicultural issues. With the zealous discussions, I expected to see some influences in the students’ creative writing assignments. However, their writings were mostly cliched and didactic with a clear intention to preach. The ideology challenged in the class reoccurred in their writings. It is understandable that ideology is resistant to change but it would be more informative to know what are the motives or constraints that propel them to follow the old ways of storytelling and teaching. More importantly, to uncover the shared values or beliefs embedded in their teaching may help us

understand whether they are recast and mingled with modern elements and under what contextual conditions their values are more likely to manifest themselves.

Thus, instead of reporting the class discussions of the postmodern picturebooks, which might reflect mainly the hypothetical statements of the participants about their thoughts and possible conducts, this study examines the representations of the values in their creative works for the shared concerns, interests, and morals that are not being verbally and explicitly addressed may find their way into the stories to be discovered. Moreover, since ideas borrowed from some master works seemed almost unavoidable for these amateur writers, their writings will be compared with the published works of similar topics or storylines to explore possible cultural or generational differences.

The Stories

From the year 2006, students enrolled in my English children's literature class had been required to create picture book stories, including texts and illustrations, collaboratively as their final assignment. It was an elective course and was open to all the students of the university. However, more than 80% of the students were freshmen English majors; the rest came from various departments and years, and even from graduate programs. Their ages ranged from 19 to 27.

The features of picture books were systematically introduced in the class, and supplemented with example picture books of various genres, topics, and themes. When a postmodern picturebook was introduced, the storyline and illustration style was purposefully compared with the traditional one that it tried to disrupt. For their story writings, certain criteria were set. The text should be limited to less than 1000 words in English and the pictures should tell the story with the text to fulfill the basic

features of a picture book; however, the graphic skills of their picture drawing were not evaluated since they lacked training in illustration.

Before the stories were finalized, draft stories and illustrations were presented to the class, who then gave feedback and suggestions for revisions if illogical or incoherent parts were found to hinder the overall understanding of the storyline. The feedback and discussion served as suggestions for them to revise their stories and illustrations. It was found that most of the critiques were given to the craft of the story, while the underlying values or moral teachings were rarely challenged, unless the teacher unveiled the hidden or implied moral messages and invited the class to share their opinions. However, it was not made as a requirement for them to accommodate any ideas from the teacher or the class in their revisions. Thus, the final versions of these stories were the students' final decisions on how their stories should be told and presented. A total of 65 stories had been collected over the past 5 years until 2010 and 54 stories were chosen to be discussed in this study, after eliminating stories that did not have narrative storylines or identifiable cultural values such as toy books, concept books or alphabet books.

Content analysis: Theoretical Framework and Method

To interpret the verbal and nonverbal texts, the open and axial coding method used in qualitative inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was utilized to mark the indicators of cultural values and gender ideology presented in narrative texts and graphics. Each story was first read as a whole to identify the topic such as friendship, family relationship, identity, and so on. Then, a closer look was given to look for details that could reveal the inscribed values. For instance, the indicators of family

values would be first sought in a story about a family, which might be found in the different roles prescribed for the family members, parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful), parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, conflict types, and the means to resolve the conflict. Also, the narration of the story, including descriptions and comments made by the writer and dialogues between the characters would be analyzed to reveal the writer's voice and stance that could have resulted from his/her values and beliefs. Stereotypical gender attributes, inequality in relationships, and gender identity would also be investigated. What was considered as ethical or socially accepted behaviors and conducts would be put into the analysis as well.

With axial coding to group and organize the primary open codes, Inter-textual themes were then sought among the stories and thus the most shared parts and other commonalities were identified to represent the shared values and beliefs held by the writers. These values were then sub-categorized to the ones that reflected the traditional cultural values of Confucianism and the ones that carried the individualistic viewpoints. The graphics and illustrations were also analyzed in particular to see how gender images and power relationships were represented in the portraits of the characters and the viewpoint, i.e., the gaze of the viewer to interpret the visual presentation of power in a relationship.

Findings and Discussion

The topics of the selected stories were categorized into sub-groups, which were friendship (16 stories), family (14), achieving goals (6), nature, animals and human beings (6), school life (3), gender relationships (3) morality (3) and culture (1). It is

obvious that issues related to friendship and family drew more attention from these young writers than the other topics. The issues of friendship centered mostly on problems of making friends or being accepted into a social group. Family issues were more about the generational gap in communication, yet filial piety was projected as a means to maintain family harmony. Although only three stories depicted gender relationships directly, gender ideology or stereotypes were found in different stories with conventional portraits of ideal female characters such as being slim, beautiful, kind hearted, loving, but not necessarily intelligent. An imbalance of power in relationships was also found that indicated men's dominating roles in the family and social relationships. Most traditional values were retained or even endorsed in the stories except for moral values, which were reinterpreted with new perspectives similar to those of feminist Confucianism. Detailed discussions are as follows.

To fit in, I Must Contribute: Societal Acceptance

The most common theme under the topic of friendship was social acceptance. Among the 54 stories, 16 stories (32%) depicted the protagonists striving for social acceptance. They are featured with a self-effacing personality or atypical or unattractive appearance, which results in their social isolation because of the lack of confidence or conformability. To resolve the issue of social isolation and create a conventional happy ending i.e., being accepted by their social groups, a similar strategy was taken by 14 writers who depicted firstly how the protagonists try to change themselves to be more like the group but always in vain. Then, the writers fabricate threatening circumstances or crises that befall the social groups to create a chance for their protagonists to demonstrate their reserved power or unrecognized

potential to” save” or even “sacrifice for” the people who used to insult, intimidate, or exclude them. In other words, they prove their worthiness to be accepted by the groups that had misunderstood or had mistreated them.

For instance, in a story, a white rabbit with a black tail is mocked and rejected even though it tries to convince people verbally that he has other strengths such as good eyes and good ears. It is not until he saves the group from a big bear who tries to eat them that the recognition and friendship he longs for are given. Those who reject him apologize, and say,

“We are so ridiculous to judge you by your appearance. Even though we are good-looking, our inside is empty,” said the monkey.

“I am so happy that you can agree with me. Now you do know how special I am, right?” Johnny said mischievously.

Everyone laughed and they all made friends with Johnny. Johnny finally understood what the Sun said he would get. It was the friendship.¹

The recurring message of saving people to be recognized seems to be a convincing way to ensure acceptance and the ending conveys more a safe and secure feeling of being accepted than a sense of self fulfillment or pride. Other alternatives of social acceptance were found in two stories in which the main characters are settled into patterns of aloneness or look for another amiable group to accept them. One of the stories is about a lonely snake who wants to make friends with other animals but ends up scaring everybody away. Later, he finds that Fox and Spider are also loners but they are content with their solitariness. The snake plans to follow them and gives up the hope of finding friends. The other story is about a colorful fairy who lives in a

green world and hates herself being different. She tries to be the same as other green fairies but fails. Her uniqueness is recognized by some friendly fairies who find her a colorful place and tell her “what really matters is what you are not what you look like.” Both endings in fact are still aligned with social recognition as a means for happy closure. The snake justifies his friendless with a group of loners, and the fairy in reality does have friends to help her accept who she truly is.

Similar topics that deal with peer pressure or positioning oneself in a not so inclusive society can be found in picture books produced by both Taiwanese writers such as *Silky's Painting* (Shiu & Ho, 2005) and Western authors for instance *A Duck so Small* (Holstein & Holstein, 1998). However, a subtle difference can be found that sets the borderline between social acceptance and self-assurance. In *Silky's* story, a vegetarian spider weaves colorful webs of different patterns. Her eccentric behavior is only recognized after she comforts her neighbors or beautifies a restaurant with her special webs. Her efforts bring acknowledgement and then her eccentricity is acknowledged as sheer genius. Similar to my students' stories, a premise to the recognition is the connection she builds with other characters who witness the “usefulness” of her talent and only then are able to appreciate her uniqueness.

On the other hand, rather than try to build a connection with his teasers, the little duck in *A Duck so Small* strives to prove himself right after the first teasing: “I may be small, but there must be something I can do.” After several trials and errors that bring more teasing, he chooses to stay away from the group until they stop their teasing. Similarly to *Silky*, he is recognized for the “help” that he offers to save a trapped duckling because his petite body can squeeze into a hole that others cannot squeeze into. He is then recognized as small but useful. The teasers now welcome him and he feels “bigger and stronger than them all.” However, unlike *Silky*, his help

is offered accidentally and he did not intentionally make an effort to fit in the group. It is the self-esteem that motivates him and the self-assurance that rewards him.

There are many more stories that guide children to see being different as an acceptable attribute if not celebratory, and we can see the help of this topic for young children's psychological well-being when they are not comfortable being different or making friends in a new environment. The central message delivered to children is mostly an assurance that society is filled with diversity and being different is in fact a normality. Nevertheless, under the influences of Confucianism, the diversity is maintained more for social harmony that emphasizes the diverse social function of individuals than individuality.

Maybe a classic model that could highlight the different mentalities on diversity and individuality is Anderson's *Ugly Duckling* story (1844). That miserable duckling goes through a series of mistreatments starting from being rejected by his own family. Despite being ugly and completely useless, the duckling is finally recognized as being special, not because what he does, but because of his true self. His metamorphosis proves that it is the "royal blood" that matters and cannot be taken away by the humble beginning. As Anderson described it,

To be born in a duck's nest, in a farmyard, is of no consequence to a bird,
if it is hatched from a swan's egg.

The ugly duckling is made to awe us, to condemn those who cannot see the hidden diamond. He is created to be adored, not to fit in. In other words, Anderson emphasizes not the contribution you have to make to be accepted. Rather, he brings us to see a self-transformation, an eccentricity to flourish.

The students' stories indeed reflect a social value that is more of the Confucian

than the Western. They emphasized more the care for others and the “useful” self that can provide the care or make a contribution to society. On one hand, this eliminates the social conflict due to individual differences; on the other hand, it ensures the legitimacy of one’s social position.

To love, I Must Obey: Filial Piety and Sibling Harmony

Following the stories of friendship, the stories about family were the second most chosen topic (14 stories). Most of the family stories expressed the warmth and support of family love; only one story berated the parents for being negligent with an overt moral teaching. The father figure is mostly depicted as an authoritarian breadwinner who has the power to make final decisions. He usually is not affectionate and is too preoccupied with his work to spend time with the family. Similarly, the mother figure mirrors the traditional mother image. She is always portrayed as a worried housekeeper and a peace maker in the family when conflicts arise. She burdens her children with her worries and only gives limited autonomy to them. Also, she is silent to her husband’s negligence or echoes his discipline when children disobey. In other words, the father figure is fortified with the support of the traditional mother figure.

The children in the stories always start out as rebellious youngsters who want to be independent and long to explore the world. Sometimes, they agonize over the parental control that pushes them to reach standards too high for them to obtain and as a result they choose to run away from the control being exerted over them. A typical story of this kind is as follows. A young “driftwood” wants to leave home to explore the world. This idea is taken as silly, immature or even dangerous because the parents

think their young “driftwood” is too young to take care of himself. His father tells him, “The world isn’t as wonderful as you think. Believe me, once you get into big troubles, you will regret your decision now. I promise you. I will let you go once I’m sure you’re ready for the challenge.” When “driftwood” starts arguing with his parents, the mother changes her soft worried tone to that of a domineering authoritarian figure, “There is no room for further discussion. Stop daydreaming. Stay at home and be a good kid.” The young “driftwood” decides to rebel and take off. However, the rebellious act does lead to regret. After a temporary period of happiness with his adventure drifting along the waves in the ocean, he encounters a crisis and regrets his rebelliousness.

“What can I do? How stupid and selfish I am.... I innocently thought that I could take care of myself. I considered that I was as brave as Daddy. Now I am stuck in the cave, but I can’t keep myself away from the troubles.”

He is saved by his parents who persistently look for his whereabouts. The father sacrifices his life to save him, and this rebellious young man learns his lesson and feels sorry for being “foolish and selfish.”

For Confucianism, filial piety follows the proper manners of *Li* (ritual), which are the measures to maintain social order for national cohesion and family harmony. Thus, children must maintain proper interaction with their parents when the parents are alive or perform worshipping rituals after they have passed away. Obedience is highlighted as the core of filial piety. Although in modern times, children are more than often spoiled, thus, when parent-child conflicts happen, Taiwanese parents may resort to Confucius’s old teachings, and accuse their children of not being filial and exercising their parental right or power to suppress rebellious sentiment as described

in the story. However, children may choose to defy the power by breaking away from the parents as the young “driftwood” does. Even so, the old teachings seem to haunt them and send them to mentally wrestle with the filial role that society expects them to play. So overwhelming are the complex feelings of joy and fear in their rebellious acts that the young people may choose to conform with the social norm and forsake their autonomy as seen in the story; the defying eventually proves itself puerile and on the other hand justifies the parents’ original concerns and their rightful power to protect, if not control, his future.

The obedience in filial piety can also be strengthened through informal education provided by social groups that hold the same values. One of my student’s stories exemplifies this scenario. The mother in the story tries to reconcile the father-daughter conflict by directing the daughter to see the father’s good intentions, saying, “Although he always blames on you and asks you to meet his standard, he just wants you to be self-disciplined. That is how your father expresses his love by being strict to you.” When the daughter refuses to soften her attitude, the mother then resorts to traditional old teachings and continues, “no matter what, he is your father, and you can’t yell at him. What you have to do is obeying what he requests you.” Then the daughter is sent to a camp that “could help her learn how to get along with her father.” Although the writer did not mention what the camp was, it was not hard to imagine it to be one of those popular spiritual development camps where Buddhism and Confucianism are taught. The camp successfully changes the girl’s attitude toward her father and at the end of the story, the girl apologizes to her father by saying, “thanks for your concern and I finally realize that you keep pushing me because you love me. Dad, I feel so sorry about offending you before. I love you.”

Besides submitting to the teaching of filial piety by being obedient to parents,

sibling harmony was also valued in the family stories, which was not much of a surprise since sibling harmony is also a part of filial piety in Confucianism which advocates filial piety and fraternal love as the foundation of *Ren*, an ideal personhood. Similar to the previous stories that regulated rebellion to negative quality, sibling harmony was achieved through removal of sibling rivalry, and the rivalry was always resolved in a filial spirit. For instance, in a story, two brothers hate each other so much that they keep a distance from each other. When their sick mother needs their help to get some life-saving herbs, the two brothers though manage to work together, even though they constantly quarrel during their journey and thus waste much valuable time before they finally get the herbs. The mother dies because of the delay; her death reconciles the brothers. Obviously, the writer punished sibling enmity with the death of the mother and constructed the reconciliation on guilt and regret.

Another story describes a proud eldest son in the family who goes on an adventure to find treasure. His two younger brothers worry about his safety and secretly follow him. The expected danger indeed befalls the elder brother and the younger brothers want to sacrifice their lives to rescue the eldest brother because, as one brother said, “he’s the most outstanding person in our family. We are stupid and useless. My grandpa expects his success so much . . .” The privilege of being the eldest son, who also happens to be the most outstanding one and who bears the expectation of the elder, deserves the sacrifice of his younger brothers. Predictably, the writer humbled this big brother with this crisis and he learns to love his brothers even more, in accord with the teaching of sibling harmony.

If we compare the sibling love of these stories with that of the works of professional writers such as Anthony Brown’s *The Tunnel* (1997) and Patricia Polacco’s *My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother* (1998), we can find a distinct

difference in how love was expressed. Both of the published works involve no parental influence or family obligation in the way their protagonists transform the sibling rivalry to love. The sibling relationships presented in my students' stories seem to be the extension of filial piety, which indicates more of a family obligation than a discovery of an inexplicable connection between siblings. It may be true that the value system in Taiwan under Confucianism imbues sibling harmony as a way to realize filial piety, but it is by no means obligatory. I believe that it could be more the influences of individual maturity than the culture that affect how we perceive and express sibling love. On the other hand, however, I also wonder whether in the Western mindset one would love their siblings so to please the parents or as part of family obligation.

Beauty Is but Skin Deep and Men Still Have More Power

Although only 3 stories directly addressed the gender relationship issue, stereotypical gender roles and attributes were found in different stories. The Cinderella prototype was mirrored in many stories in which being gentle, soft, passive, and altruistic are presented as desirable feminine characteristics. As for appearance, being slim with big eyes and white skin were the basic requirements of female beauty. However, external beauty alone would not be considered as a sufficient quality for a good woman and could be punished if the external beauty was associated with vanity or ostentatiousness. For instance, a story describes a beautiful fish who is proud of her own beauty but not satisfied. She wants all the rainbow colors on her scales and is so desperate that she is tricked into biting a colorful bait and gets caught by a human. In another story, a prince finally finds his perfect princess who is impeccable in every

way as he is hard to please, but later he realizes that her perfectness is merely a deception. Both stories convey a message that pursuing external beauty is not only vain but also foolish.

The power of men over women in a relationship was also manifested in one of the stories, in which the prince, similar to any traditional story, is given the power to choose his princess and can even replace her when she becomes not perfect anymore. The writer and illustrator of the story meant to teach a lesson in which external beauty does not last and the inner beauty will shine through and make one beautiful, i.e., if you have a kind heart you will become beautiful. Two sisters are made to contrast with each other in appearance and character. One is beautiful but lazy and unkind. The other one looks fat and hideous but is kind and diligent. Unquestionably, the prince chooses the external beauty to be his wife, but right after the wedding he has to leave for a war. The beautiful princess is lonely and becomes even lazier. She asks her ugly sister to do all the household chores while she indulges herself in nothingness and food. For this reason, she gains too much weight and is not even recognized by her prince when he comes back. He mistakes the ugly one, who is now slim and beautiful because of her diligence and hard work, as his princess. After knowing the true color of the external beauty, he divorces her and replaces her with her sister, literally illustrated in the picture in the final scene where the bride figure on the topper of a big wedding cake is being pulled off from the cake by two big hands, the prince's of course. The imbalanced power in the relationship cannot be more manifested. Similar to the previous two stories that punish superficial beauty, this story was meant to teach the virtues of being kind and diligent; however, it unintentionally revealed a hidden power-unbalanced relationship that granted the power of choosing partners and terminating a relationship to the male. The ideal cohesion of external and internal

beauty seems applied only to women, who can only wait passively to be judged by a domineering man.

In contrast to men's harsh judgments on women, who are required to be beautiful inside and out, women seem to be easier on men whose unfavorable looks can always be overlooked if sincerity and bravery can be demonstrated as shown in two stories. The first one features a male giraffe who is rejected by a female giraffe because of his abnormally long neck, but he eventually wins her heart with a heroic deed. The other story describes a male panda who would like to offer his singing as a birthday gift for the girl he admires. He practices his singing very hard but later finds out that compared to others' expensive gifts, his singing seems embarrassingly valueless. Nevertheless, the female panda is touched by his effort and encourages him to sing at her birthday party. She likes his singing and so do the guests and the story ends with a promising start of a relationship. It seems that the defect in a man's appearance can be compensated by his other qualities, and sincerity and willingness to make efforts appeared to be the more important traits in a relationship. The gender ideology found in old fairy tales such as *Beauty and Beast* and *Cinderella* persistently reoccurs and finds its way to the young people's writing. Although post-modern fairy tales or even movies such as *Shrek* are appreciated for their giving females more agency and power and for challenging the traditional female image and standards of beauty, it is still a challenge for the young people to be able to critically avert influences of the customary perceptions and thinking in their writing.

Morals with a Modern Twist

If the findings so far reveal no clear changes of the traditional values in young people's writing, this part on moral values may give a fresher view on their concept of morality. Among those 54 stories, almost every story could be identified with one moral value or two. In these stories, the old wisdom proves its timeless influences such as Confucius's *What you don't want done to you, don't do to others*, or *good deeds bring good rewards*, *still waters run deep*, *patience is a virtue* and so on. Although most of the stories still gave straightforward or at least identifiable moral teachings, a couple of the stories came across with a noteworthy change that challenges the dichotomy of moral good and moral evil. The moral, *you can't get anything from nothing* mentioned earlier in Chen's study (2003) was challenged by a story that questioned whether hard work brings a good outcome. The story describes a little turtle who has been training very hard for a race on the sports day. He tries all kinds of silly ways to make himself run faster but nothing helps. On that day and in the middle of his slow crawling on the track, a mole happens to poke his head out of the ground and thrust the turtle up to air and send him directly to the finish line and he wins the race. The story highlights the mystical power that luck plays in our lives. The ending seemed to suggest that luck might play a more important role than diligence or hard work. This kind of opportunistic thinking has been discouraged by traditional teaching particularly the teaching of self-discipline in Confucianism, and thus its emergence may denote a change of mindset in how we succeed.

Another piece of evidence that shows a change of mindset was found in one story about a poor man struggling to feed his family. He accidentally finds an expensive vase and thinks about selling it for money, but the thought brings him

serious moral struggles. His wife is afraid that he may be caught later and asks him to return the vase, but he thinks of trading his freedom for the money. i.e., sell the vase and hide the money for the family; if he gets caught, his family will survive with the money. On the other hand, he knows the guilt of being a thief will follow him and make him miserable. He ponders this over and over and is struck with an idea, thus, he picks up the vase and walks out of the door. Unfortunately he is hit by a car, the vase shatters into many pieces, and the man dies. No one knows whether he had planned to return the vase or sell it, or if he had come up with another plan; the ending is open to the readers' interpretations. A spectrum of possibilities lay between being righteous and sinful and the love for his family makes this story resonate with a theme that both Gilligan and feminist Confucianism have proposed, a moral reasoning based on care and selflessness.

Conclusion

The analysis of the students' narratives not only yields a similar result as those of the previous studies mentioned earlier but also provides the fictional contexts where these values could be perceived. This study confirmed that the traditional values, in particular, social harmony and filial piety, were still held firmly by these young writers. Being able to make significant social contributions was regarded as a crucial factor for one to be accepted by a social group or to maintain a social relationship. The values of filial piety were so deeply rooted in these young minds that rebellious thoughts were demolished and autonomy could be sacrificed. Gender ideology detected in the stories was similar to the traditional concepts that gave more power to men in gender relationships; external beauty was devalued yet remained as a positive

attribute for women. Moral teaching was found in almost all the stories; however, new perspectives were found in moral reasoning that suggested a touch of feminist Confucianism.

The findings may prove that old wisdom or teaching is still valued by the younger generation. However, I wondered why these young people, whom I assumed would be more creative and bold and reluctant to abide by tradition, chose to write stories heavily loaded with moral values rather than let their imaginations run away to catch some whimsical joy. I surmised that some underlying influences from their past experiences might have driven them to inscribe moral teaching in their writing.

One possible influence may be the prevalent emphasis on the educational function of stories. As is evident in Wang's study (2004), her college students who were education majors could easily identify the merits of reading picture books and most of the merits were for educational purposes such as reading skills and moral development. Teachers and parents are used to guiding children to "decode" morals from stories. Growing up with an expectation of how a story should be read, when being asked to write stories for children, it is not a surprise that my college students would "encode" moral lessons in their writings.

Another influence or reason that may explain why they saturated their writings with moral teachings may be the social role they had adopted as a children's writer and thus carried out the social responsibility or expectation embedded in the role, i.e., to imbue inherited and shared social and cultural values. The study of role-taking in social psychology (Mead, 1934) has long denoted this phenomenon and Michael L.Schwalbe's (1988) further study that claims that the differences between ability and propensity in role-taking, may be applied to explain my students' motive in role

taking. Schwalbe indicates that role-taking is less an act at a cognitive or affective level than it is at a social structure level, and “the most important situational variable affecting role taking would seem to be power” (p. 419). In other words, certain degrees of socialization can affect the propensity in role taking, and the ones who have more social power may have more choices to ignore the perspectives of others or reject taking certain roles. Studies have shown that in a segregated society where complex interactions among people are not demanded or prohibited, and diverse perspectives hardly collide, the ability or effort in role taking may not be obvious (Coser, 1975; Bernstein, 1973; cited from Schwalbe, 1988, p. 420). However, if one realizes the consequences or the responsibility of his/her role taking, one will be more motivated to take different roles.

Schwalbe expanded Mead’s notion from “a complex generalized others” to the internalized social structure in role-taking, and he notes,

....the generalized other comprises numerous ‘organized others’ representing various groups with which the individual is familiar. The mind is thus organized in parallel fashion to the organization of society, as the individual experiences it. What are thus internalized and organized are numerous potential responses to one’s social acts. The more such responses are internalized, the more readily a person can enter the perspectives of others. (p. 423)

He goes further and points out that, “Role taking propensity may depend in part, in other words, on what one is taught to do routinely before taking any action that might affect others” (p. 423). He finds that the “moral socialization strategy often used by parents to teach moral behavior” (p. 423) is conditioned into their young.

Moreover, “role taking can thus become a conscious part of a script for construction morally responsible behavior” (pp. 423-424).

This notion to some extent reflects the situation in Taiwan, a collective society under the influences of Confucianism, where proper behavior for interpersonal communication is emphasized not only in the family but also in schools of every level, and of course the mass media also plays an important role in promulgating these values as well. Children are prescribed with specific social roles and given less power to exercise autonomy. They are taught to be respectful to their seniors including teachers and parents, and to be aware of the consequences of their actions and to be cognizant of the expectations put on them by their parents and society.

Under this didactic tradition, stories are often taken as sugar-coated lessons to learn the societal rules or as values to emulate from the role models. Thus, as mentioned earlier, when my students were asked to write stories for children, they might have experienced a role shifting from a story reader to a story writer, and thus to construct stories for children, the role of an adult was adopted and the familiar Confucian teachings of social and family harmony and responsibility were comfortably integrated in their writings. Regardless of the new perspectives or inspirations they had obtained from reading post modern picturebooks in the class, the role they had chosen to take as an adult writer would compel them to write with didactic messages. Only the moral reasoning of these students was able to turn away slightly from the gaze of others with a gentle touch of personal or even pragmatic interpretation that reflects more or less the social reality they had perceived; yet, the core values of care and selflessness remained in the process of reasoning. All these findings strike me with an understanding that as long as the concepts of social roles are implanted in their learning, they may forever be Cinderella and Confucius.

Clearly, one limitation is that we need not examine all story books written by

western writers to assess whether our contention that western storybooks focus more on individualism is valid. Nor did we examine all Taiwanese storybooks to see if there really is a Confucian element to them. Therefore, this is one area that might be looked at in more depth. This study only analyzed 54 draft stories; it was not our intention to generalize the results to make a comparison of the West and East. It may, however, be a starting point for others to undertake such studies.

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八、受邀證明

IRSCL- Full Draft Congress Program 2011

Friday 8th July		
8:30am	Registration Opens	Z Block, Level 4 Foyer
9:00am	Concurrent Session I	
Session I1 Room: Z302	"Do not try this at home": The reception of Ulf Stark's books in New Zealand	Forever Cinderella and Confucius: Gender Ideology and Social values in College Students' Creative Narratives for Children
Session Chair: Vivienne Muller	Anne Siebeck, Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand)	Hui-Ling Huang, Yunlin University of Science and Technology (Taiwan)

黃惠玲教授於 2011/07/08 發表論文

Forever Cinderella and Confucius: Gender Ideology and Social Values in College
Students' Creative Narratives for Children