

# 行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計畫 期中進度報告

## 進入初始的同儕文化(2/3)

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計畫主持人：梁瓊惠

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# 行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計畫成果報告

## 進入初始的同儕文化(2/3)

### Entering the Initial Peer Culture (2/3)

計畫編號：NSC 92-2413-H-009-005

執行期限：92年08月01日至93年07月31日

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#### 一、中文摘要

本計畫的目的為探討兒童進入初始同儕文化的歷程。兒童初始與同儕的互動及由家庭向外移向學校的時間通常由父母決定，這些決定和父母的文化信念系統和作為有關。由於臺灣幼稚園就學率的提高，同儕在兒童生活中扮演的角色也日趨重要。台灣父母通常認為自身在孩子社會化的歷程中扮演非常重要的角色，同儕的角色相對較不重要。雖然許多研究指出同儕關係和友誼對兒童的學校適應和學業表現有重大的影響，我們對台灣兒童進入同儕文化及同儕文化的發生過程所知非常有限。台灣兒童社會化歷程的研究著重於大人，關於大人和兒童如何共同影響和參與同儕社會化歷程則相對被忽略，本研究採用民族誌研究法，對家庭成員進行深度訪談並詳細觀察及探究兒童的日常生活。針對三個問題來切入主研究的主题：1. 父母關於兒童同儕文化的信念為何？2. 經由兒童的共同參與，父母的信念系統如何影響兒童由家庭到學校的轉接？3. 幼稚園兒童如何建構同儕文化？第二年的工作重點為為進入幼稚園現場，參與、觀察、記錄同儕活動，探究小孩從家庭進入幼稚園的過程和幼稚園同儕文化的建構。

**關鍵詞：**社會化、同儕、兒童、幼稚園、臺灣

#### Abstract

The goal of this study is to investigate children's entry into their initial peer cultures. Parents usually make decisions about children's initial interactions with peers and when children move outside families to

preschool. The nature and timing of these decisions relate to parental cultural belief systems and practices. Because the increasing number of children who now are attending preschools in Taiwan, the role of peers becomes very significant in children's daily life. Taiwanese parents often consider their role in children's socialization a very significant one. Peers are not considered as important as parents. This project investigates children's entry from family to their initial peer culture by ethnographic approach, involving in-depth interviews with families and thorough observation and investigation of children's daily life at a regular interval over a period of two years. Three main questions are investigated in this project: What are parents' cultural belief systems about children's peer cultures? How the belief systems, jointly with children's participation in the transition process, influence children's transition from families to peer groups? And how children begin to construct of their initial peer cultures in the preschool setting? The second year of this project focuses on fieldwork in the preschool, through participation, observation and recordings to investigate the process of children's moving from family to preschool and the construction of peer cultures.

**Keywords:** socialization, peer, children, preschool, Taiwan

#### 二、緣由與目的

The goal of this study is to investigate children's entry into initial peer cultures.

Parents usually make decisions about children's initial interactions with peers and when children move outside families to preschool. The nature and timing of these decisions relate to parental cultural belief systems and practices (Corsaro, 1997). Yet, the process is not solely decided by parents. Children themselves also play important roles. By viewing socialization as the process of how children grow up to be cultural beings, children's active role in selecting from cultural resources, using resources in creative ways, and contributing to the production of adult culture is revealed (Gaskins, Miller & Corsaro, 1992). The influence of peer relationships and friendships in the classroom environment has been extensively studied in the past decades. Evidence supports that children's classroom peer relationships may operate as relational supports or stressors (e.g., Furman & Robbins, 1985; Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1997). Friendships have been viewed as support systems that facilitate school adjustment (Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996). Therefore, how parents, children themselves and their classroom peers jointly participate in the socialization process in the home-school transition is an important area for investigation.

Because the increasing number of children who now are attending preschools in Taiwan, for example, a recent study showed that majority of 3- to 6-year olds (64.8%) attended preschool (Lin & Fung, 1999), preschool as well as family has become an important context for preschool-aged children's socialization. By 3 years of age, many Taiwanese youngsters have entered their initial peer cultures from families to preschool.

Current studies have shown that contemporary Taiwanese parents believe that their role as a socializing agent is a very significant one. They take many opportunities to teach their children and feel that they themselves must set an example for their children's moral character. These views are consistent with the Confucian emphasis on teaching. How children make a transition from families to preschool and how they

construct peer cultures in the preschool is largely unknown. The present study aims to fill this gap to investigate how parents, children themselves and their peers jointly participate in the socialization process in the home and school contexts.

### 三、結果與討論

The focus of the project in the second year is on how parents and children work together in the process of moving from home to preschool, and the construction of peer cultures in the preschool setting.

The major method of investigating this process was participating and observing children's daily activities in the preschool. The researcher entered a 3-year-old group (the Lamb Group) in a preschool in Taipei city and established a unique role in the preschool which enabled the access to the children's peer activities. The preschool was in an older community in Taipei city. Most people were long-time residents in the area for generations. Most children enrolled in this private preschool lived in the area or had local ties that their grandparents or relatives were residents of the community. Most parents of the children were college graduated, owned their own business or held middle-class jobs. There were 18 and 20 children in the classroom in the Fall and Spring respectively. 17 stayed in the same classroom for both semesters. Participant observation was conducted one day a week regularly and on some weekends for special events. From September 2003 to May 2004, accumulated participation time was more than 350 hours and about 200 hours of video and audio recordings were made. Informal interviews with teachers and parents were conducted in a conversational way to ensure comfort of the interviewees.

The researcher was very careful to maintain a unique role in the preschool. The researcher discussed with the teachers and school staff before school started to ensure the position of participating in children's activities. Teachers were told to go on their daily activities naturally and treated the researcher as much as a new child who just entered the preschool. When school started,

the researcher and her assistant were introduced to the whole school by first names, which was unusual for adults. Most children called me Chung-Hui or Liang Chung-Hui. At times a few of them would use older sister Chung-Hui because their parents insisted them to do so but they didn't always remember to say older sister. They interacted and played with the researcher freely both in the classroom and on the playground. Some kindly provided instructions about how to behave in the preschool.

A wireless microphone was carried by a child or the researcher when video recordings were made. Three to four stuffed animals were brought to the classroom and one of them with a microphone hidden inside. After becoming familiar with the researcher, children started to volunteer to take care of the stuffed animals. A child could carry the stuffed animal for a whole school day or shorter time by choice. The recording was made to follow a child's life in the preschool, not necessarily the scheduled activities arranged by the teachers. Audio recordings were made with recorders carried by the researcher. Both video and audio recordings lasted for about 7 to 8 hours for a typical day.

#### Adult participation in the child's transition

Parents' efforts of helping their children to adjust the school life were significant. Their ways varied depending on individual child's situation. Their communication with the teacher was frequent. Parents responded to the teacher's daily comments on the child's "communication booklet." They talked to the teacher in length when they came to pick up their children or phoned the teacher. They also participated in the Parent-Teacher meetings and made suggestions. Busy parents made an effort to deliver their children to school and picked them up in the afternoon. When the children seemed to get used to the school routine and did not have emotional disturbances, four of the children in this 3-year-old group started to take the school bus or be picked up by their family helpers or relatives. Treats, candies, stickers and toys were allowed to bring to school to share with peers as rewards

of going to school.

The issue of crying because of separating from parents or caregivers was common during the first weeks of school days. In the morning, when children first entered their classroom, the teacher would encourage them to say good-bye to parents and walked the parents to the front gate of the school, even those who were with tears. Crying was allowed. Child would be told that it was ok to cry for a while when leaving parents and felt sorry. They were also told that they would gradually "grow up" to do their own things in the school without parents. Children who felt distressed might chose to stay close with the teacher or the teaching assistant.

#### Peer involvement

Peer involvement in the children's initial school adjustment was obvious. Three children in this 3-year-old group had attended the preschool for a semester or longer. They had been familiar with the school routine. They often provided instructions to the newcomers, including the researcher and the research assistant. The space arrangement and the overall philosophy of the preschool encouraged children from different classrooms to interact frequently. Consequently, newcomers would receive directions and help from children from other classrooms. Siblings, relatives, neighbors and friends in other classrooms at times visited each other's classroom or played together. A 3-year-old girl who cried frequently during her first few weeks of school often went to her older brother's classroom during free time. Sometimes her brother came over to see her at the door of the classroom. For a few days she cried and seemed upset almost all day long, but smiled happily when holding her brother's hand and walking together into the school bus at the end of the school day.

#### Becoming a member of the peer culture

When children enter into preschool, their membership in the local culture and their participation in sociocultural activities change over time (Rogoff, 1996; Corsaro, 2002). Upon entering into preschool, a child

becomes a member of the preschool in addition to a member of the family. He/She faces new demands to be a good student and a good peer-group member (Hadley, 2003). The way in which children engaged in their routine activities or cultural practices contributes greatly to their becoming members of the peer culture.

Appropriate routine in the family such as good sleep routine was important for the child to maintain adequate social adjustment (Bates, Viken, Alexander, Beyers & Stockton, 2002). Children who had regular sleep and eating routine in the family seemed to be soon adjusted in the preschool routine. Children with troubles in sleep and eating routine in the preschool faced daily challenges in their preschool life.

From children's routine activities related to sharing, friendships, social participation and attempts to gain control over adult authority, it was revealed that children made persistent attempts to gain control and autonomy and share that control with each other. Conflict and social differentiation based on gender and status were found in children's peer cultures.

Group membership (e.g., classmates) which was greatly emphasized both in the classroom and school levels were also important to the understanding of children's peer cultures. Children in the preschool were assumed to be friendly to each other. Children's membership of a particular classroom and their identity of being classmates were frequently reinforced in daily activities. Children's preference of some particular friends was accepted; any action demonstrating rejection of any schoolmates or classmates was intervened by the teachers or school staff. Adults in this preschool concerned greatly about children's maintaining good peer relationships and having friends. The teacher in the 3-year-old group observed closely about children's friendships and peer interactions. Every child in the 3-year-old group seemed to have friends to play with and talk to. Children's interaction styles show variations. One type of children who formed their core group and almost always stayed together whenever they

play. Other children seemed not so concerned about being a member of a subgroup. During the first semester, a few children did not interact with peers frequently. In the second semester, every child was active in peer activities.

The influence of peer relationships and friendships in the classroom environment has been extensively studied in the past decades. Many studies pointed to the importance of peer relationships and friendships to children's school adjustment, both socially and academically. Evidence supports that children's classroom peer relationships may operate as relational supports or stressors (e.g., Furman & Robbins, 1985; Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1997). Friendships have been viewed as support systems that facilitate school adjustment (Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996).

Friendships are especially important when children make a transition. During their first year at school, children with friends are more likely to enjoy school life and adjust well to school (Ladd, 1990, 1999; Ladd & Kochenderfer, 1996). Children's past friendships are also related to their social participation in new classroom or school. Past friendship history was found as a predictor of children's liking of new friends (Dunn, Cutting & Fisher, 2002).

In sum, young children's collective contribution to children's membership in the peer group is evident. Their engagement in peer routine activities features the major themes in the peer culture and points to how members of the peer culture behave in daily life. Friendships are particularly important to their school adjustment during transitions. How a child makes friends, maintains friendships and participates in peer routines are key to his/her becoming a member of the peer culture.

#### 四、計畫成果自評

The project proceeds as stated in the original proposal with more emphasis on the peer activities. Daily audio and video recordings were more intensive than planned. It is expected that the data collected during the second year will yield rich information

about peer culture construction and children's transition from family to preschool. The information yielded from this study will also be important to parents, teachers and other professionals who work with children and need a deep understanding of children's transition from families to peer groups and their everyday life among their peers.

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# 行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫期中進度報告

## 進入初始的同儕文化(2/3)

### Entering the Initial Peer Culture (2/3)

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計畫編號：NSC 92 - 2413 - H - 009 - 005 -

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計畫主持人：梁瓊惠

共同主持人：

計畫參與人員：

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本成果報告包括以下應繳交之附件：

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