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# Observation on foreign children's literature in Taiwan: The future of local children's literature in Taiwan

Han-Lin Lin

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OBSERVATION ON FOREIGN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TAIWAN

THE FUTURE OF LOCAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TAIWAN

by

Han-Lin Lin

Thesis

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Eastern Michigan University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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in

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Thesis Committee:

Ian Wojcik-Andrews, PhD, Chair

Sheila M. Most, PhD

November 1, 2006

Ypsilanti, Michigan

獻給我的父母

For My Parents

I Love You

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## ABSTRACT

Formosa-Taiwan is a small island with a unique culture. Because of its blood relationship with China, Taiwan inherits the traditional Chinese cultural features from mainland China. Inside Taiwan, the indigenous cultures are going to fade, while the increasing number of the children of foreign brides will play an important role in the future. On the other hand, culture from Japan and the West keep influencing Taiwan. We mix all resources together and hope to keep our culture growing in this rich land.

The thesis will focus on the development of local children's literature in Taiwan: the importance, influence, and problems of foreign children's literature in Taiwan and how Taiwan can create her own arts based on the knowledge from these foreign children's arts to solve the present difficulty with children's books.

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## CHAPTER 1: WHAT CHILDREN IN TAIWAN READ TODAY

### Introduction

Taiwan, located in Southeast Asia, is a small island with a complex cultural background. Most people in Taiwan come from mainland China and bring with them a traditional, older Chinese culture. Indigenous people in Taiwan still preserve their own culture but now face culture shock as more and more cultures rise in Taiwan and challenge what Taiwan has been for thousands of years. Not only do various cultures interact inside Taiwan, but foreign cultures also knock on our door.

As a result of these emerging cultural clashes, people in Taiwan have started to pay particular attention to the issue of multiculturalism. Particularly, it is our responsibility to educate children in Taiwan and to make them familiar with various cultures around the world, and children's literature is the place to begin that education.

This research consists of five chapters. In Chapter One, "What Children in Taiwan Read Today," I will point out children's main reading activities after school in Taiwan and the role children's literature plays in these activities. Comics in Taiwan are a unique phenomenon that will be discussed separately. Because comics, unlike other genres, have been an important part of children's literature in Taiwan, I will discuss the issue of comics in Taiwan in Chapter One. Then, I will start to discuss children's literature in Taiwan in Chapter Two, "The Distribution of Children's Literature in Taiwan." I will focus on the process and challenges faced by local children's literature writers in Taiwan in recent years. Chapter Three,

on “Foreign Children's Literature in Taiwan,” is the chapter in which I discuss the importance and problems that foreign children's literature must face in Taiwan. How we connect these two kinds of children's literature from local and foreign cultures is the main issue I will explore in Chapter Four, “Learning from Others and Keeping Us in the Mainstream.” Chapter Five, “Conclusion,” is where I discuss the future of children's literature in Taiwan. I will adapt resources from journals, government reports, and other related information to complete this research.

### **School Textbooks**

Before discussing the role children's literature plays for children in Taiwan, we need to know how children in Taiwan spend their leisure time after school. What kinds of activities do children in Taiwan mainly do after school? According to a survey reported by the Children's Bureau Ministry of the Interior R.O.C (內政部兒童局) in 2005, 40.56% of children in Taiwan have to join private classes to acquire more talent and skills regularly after school. The percentage increased to 45.94% during summer and winter vacation. Sixty and eighty nine tenths percent of children in Taiwan overall take private classes, and foreign language and mathematics are the most popular subjects they study. These data shows that many parents in Taiwan are used to pushing their children to learn more subjects after school. It is true that parents in Taiwan focus heavily on their children's after-school studies. Most children in Taiwan, especially in cities, need to study as hard as they can to get high grades in

order to enter better schools. It is these high expectations from parents and society that stress children about school studies (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Respecting Profession" 14-15).

Textbooks are the main reading materials for children in Taiwan after school. However, spending time studying textbooks gives children in Taiwan less time to enjoy what they really want to read. Moreover, studying too many textbooks not only makes children give up reading but increases their time watching television or playing video games, which they do to escape the pressure of reading boring textbooks. Though parents in Taiwan still focus heavily on their children's after-school studies, more and more people in Taiwan are learning the importance of providing children with less formal reading material and, perhaps, happier childhoods. Subjects such as mathematics are not the only subjects parents ask their children to learn, and textbooks are not the only kind of reading material that occupies children's lives. Children in Taiwan are still under pressure to study heavily, but more reading choices mean that they can enjoy after-school studies.

### **Children's Literature**

It is true that the development of children's literature in Taiwan has been slow. As mentioned above, parents' high expectations force children to concentrate on school studies. Therefore, textbooks remain the most common reading material for children in Taiwan. However, children in Taiwan do read other kinds of children's literature in their leisure time. For example, fairy tales and biographies of great men are common reading materials. It is in

recent years that people have had the notion to stress children's literature other than in textbooks in Taiwan. Before these ten years, there were many local children's literature authors, like Lin, Liang (林良), devoted to creating for children in Taiwan. Even though these authors could write excellent children's literature, it was the ignorance of readers that made the whole children's publishing market weak.

In recent years, the economic condition of Taiwan has improved so that parents can provide more money for children. Now, parents not only focus on their children's study but also concentrate on the quality of their education. Local publishers in Taiwan have started to import foreign children's literature to this island. This has stimulated the development, in turn, of local children's literature in Taiwan. Children's literature now plays a more important and necessary role in Taiwan although there are still many problems existing in this market, which will be discussed in the following chapters. Children's literature in Taiwan will definitely have a bright future if we have the confidence to improve it.

### **Comics (Manga)**

Taiwan started to publish its own comics in the 1930s. In the 1950s, Xing-Gin Liu (劉興欽) was the first author to create local comics for children in Taiwan. Because of Xing-Gin Liu's unique incorporation of cultural narratives and knowledge, local comics became the first choice for children to read in the 1950s (Li, Shin-Ru, "The Endless Stories" 24). In the 1970s, comics from Japan started to occupy the comic market in Taiwan even though they

were published in Chinese editions. Because of comic censorship and the absence of new local authors in Taiwan, local comics in Taiwan stopped growing. Before the early 1990s, when a new group of local comic authors in Taiwan emerged under the protection of copyright, Japanese comics played an important role for children born during the 1970s and 1990s in Taiwan (Li, Shin-Ru, "Flying Freely" 10). However, these new local comic authors in Taiwan only thrived for a short period. Then, the comics market was occupied by Japanese comics again. Local comic authors in Taiwan can produce comics equal in quality to those of authors from other countries; however, it is a unique cultural style that local comic authors in Taiwan lack.

The imitation of Japanese comics is the reason why local comic authors in Taiwan have lost their market share. Besides, the rise of online video games also has threatened the market for local comics. The visual stimulation of online games occupies children's leisure time, and it is harder for local comics to survive under the huge power of Japanese comics (Qiu 1).

Comics also play an important role that brings influence to the publishing market all over the world. Take Borders in the United States, for example, where the sale of comics doubled every year from 2001 to 2003. In France, five of the top ten best-selling texts in 2004 were comics (Li, Shin-Ru, "Flying Freely" 10). These huge sales activate the publishing market and cannot be replaced by any other type of books. If we give up on local comics in

Taiwan and rely on the importing of foreign comics, Taiwan's comic industry would not benefit.

Besides, comics are the power that can promote animation. Like in Japan, which has a deep comic culture, 20% of the publications are comics, and this rich resource can support Japanese animation sufficiently. On the basis of these comics, Japan develops its cartoon and animated movies quickly and easily (Li, Shin-Ru, "Flying Freely" 11). There are many excellent people in Taiwan working for foreign industries that produce animated movies and cartoons, and it is evident that the illustration skills in Taiwan have reached the international level. With these excellent authors, Taiwan certainly can develop its own animated world. Of course, there are many problems we need to overcome to reach this goal; however, we can follow the Japanese experience and strengthen our local comic industry so that it becomes the foundation for the future. It would be a pity if we gave up our local comics industry and only provided assistance to other countries.

Every year in the Taipei International Books Fair (台北國際書展), there is an individual exhibition area for comics that always attracts many comics fans. Even though the local creation of comics is weak in Taiwan, the comics market is still thriving because of the various titles of foreign comics. However, we still hope that the production of local comics in Taiwan can lead the home market.

Comics in Taiwan were once regarded as the best in the field of comics. We still need to learn from other countries how to improve other kinds of local children's literature in Taiwan, but when it comes to comics, we are undoubtedly the country that can provide successful experiences for others. All we have to do is find our confidence and make ourselves strong again.

It is easy to pick up from where we left off; however, looking toward the future of children's literature in Taiwan as a whole, it's a long way back. Some questions might be the following: What is the current development of children's literature, including local and foreign children's literature, in Taiwan? What are the difficulties Taiwan faces and the interaction between foreign and local children's literature? There is a huge hope we have for children's literature in Taiwan to build up a complete reading world for children. Exploring our problems and looking for methods to improve them are what we need to focus on now.

## **CHAPTER 2: THE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TAIWAN**

In this chapter, I will discuss local publishers, booksellers, academics, and authors in Taiwan. Some questions might be: in the past twenty years how have these producers of children's literature overcome the problems they faced when they supported local children's literature in Taiwan? The main ideas this chapter will explore are what does Taiwan already have, but needs to develop more? And what is it short of, and needs to learn from others?

### **Local Children's Literature in Taiwan Versus Taiwanese Children's Literature**

When I use the term “children's literature in Taiwan” in this research, it means all children's literature, including foreign and local children's literature available in Taiwan. Why do I use “local” but not “Taiwanese?” Before we go into this issue, it is important to make clear what I mean by the term “local children's literature in Taiwan” rather than “Taiwanese children's literature.”

As I mentioned in Chapter One, Taiwan is a small island that combines many different cultural sources. Taiwan inherits a culture from mainland China but still keeps some of the local indigenous culture. “Taiwanese” is basically used to represent people whose ancestors came from the Fukien province (福建省) of southeast mainland China. If I only discussed “Taiwanese children's literature,” the issue would be too limited to represent the whole situation of children's literature in Taiwan. “Local children's literature in Taiwan” is a more suitable term because it represents all those aspects of children's literature that play an

important role in Taiwan today. It contains all the local children's literature we can find in Taiwan, not only that which is specifically Taiwanese. The concept of a “local children's literature in Taiwan” is varied and truly reflects what's going on inside the whole children's literature market in Taiwan.

## **I. Publishers**

Among all the advocators of children's literature in Taiwan, the publishers have the strongest power to create a viable market. Indeed, with the efforts of the publishers, people started to notice children's literature in Taiwan. In this section I will first introduce some important local publishers of children's literature in Taiwan and then discuss some problems they have encountered.

There are some local publishers in Taiwan that focus on children's books, like the New Schoolmate Book Company (新學友), the Youth Cultural Enterprise Co. Ltd. (幼獅文化), and the Hsin Yi Foundation (信誼基金會). These local publishers concentrate on different fields of children's literature in Taiwan.

The New Schoolmate Company is one of the oldest publishers in Taiwan of children's books. As I discussed in Chapter One, textbooks were the major forms of reading for most children in Taiwan before Taiwan improved its economy in the early 1960s. At that time, local publishers who could provide reading materials for local schools controlled the children's book market in Taiwan, and the New Schoolmate Company is this kind of

publisher. However, the New Schoolmate Company not only has textbooks for children preschool to grade six, but it also publishes a weekly newspaper and monthly magazine, Child, for children.

The Youth Cultural Enterprises Co. is another major local publisher in Taiwan that provides textbooks for high school students. The Youth Cultural Enterprises Co. also publishes Youth Literary Monthly (幼獅文藝) and Youth Juvenile Monthly (幼獅少年) in book form. These reading materials that the New Schoolmate Company and the Youth Cultural Enterprises Co. publishes played an important role for children in Taiwan when there were only a few professional editions for children. Children in Taiwan can not only read famous writers' articles from these two works but also have the chance to show their articles and comics by making contributions. The Youth Cultural Enterprises Co. also runs two radio stations for children, which play the important role in providing more literary entertainment.

Unlike the New Schoolmate Company and the Youth Cultural Enterprises Co., which concentrate on textbooks and other reading materials for school students, the Hsin Yi Foundation promotes preschool learning materials. The Hsin Yi Foundation, established in 1978, was the first publisher that promoted picture books for children in Taiwan. The Hsin Yi Foundation is supported by the major paper manufacturer in Taiwan, the Yuen Fong Yu Paper group (永豐餘). The Hsin Yi Foundation not only buys copyrights of foreign children's literature and translates it into Chinese but also promotes local creations. The Hsin Yi

Foundation tries to encourage local writers and illustrators of children's literature in Taiwan. Therefore, they hold the Hsin Yi Picture Book Award every year. The annual award was started in 1988 and has become the most important picture book award in Taiwan. Winners of the Hsin Yi Picture Book Award not only win the honor but also get the chance to publish their works. It is the Hsin Yi Foundation's intention to sell these local authors' works internationally.

Besides these three local publishers in Taiwan, others have started to notice the children's market, too. The Yuan Liou Publishing Company (遠流) published a set of Chinese folk tale picture books in the early 1900s. This set were the first picture books with fine illustrations and printing that introduced Chinese folk tales to children in Taiwan. The set includes The Mouse Bride: A Chinese Folktale (老鼠娶新娘), illustrated by Lesley Liu (劉文慧) and narrated by Monica Chang (張玲玲). The Mouse Bride: A Chinese Folktale won the Catalonia Best Illustrator Award in Barcelona, Spain in 1992. Some books in this set also were entered in the Bologna Children's Book Fair and won awards in 1992 and 1993. With the help of winning these international awards, the Yuan Liou Publishing Company introduced local children's literature in Taiwan to other countries successfully.

Linking (聯經) is another important local publisher in Taiwan that started to promote children's books other than textbooks in the early 1900s. According to Publishers Weekly May 17, 1991, the percentage of children's books of Linking's total publications in 1991

reached 25%, and this is evidence that the market of children's literature in Taiwan started to grow and could not be ignored. This information gave Linking confidence to publish children's books of higher quality. Before the 1960s, when Taiwan was in an economic depression, low-quality books and poor print were enough to satisfy readers. Since the economy turned better during the 1970s and 1980s, the need for better quality children's books has grown. The publishing of quality books for children points to the awakening of the children's literature market in Taiwan.

Local publishers in Taiwan mentioned above, such as the New Schoolmate Book Company, the Hsin Yi Foundation, and Linking, have devoted themselves to children's literature in Taiwan for decades. They have established their publishing styles, and all play an important role in the children's literature publishing market today. In the last ten years, many new local publishers in Taiwan that focus on children's literature have stepped into this garden and brought fresh air to it.

The Grimm Press (格林文化), one of these young local publishers, was the first one to concentrate on publishing picture books in Taiwan. With more than one hundred excellent illustrators from all over the world, most picture books published by the Grimm Press won international awards for illustrations. The Grimm Press even holds the record for being the first publisher to have the most books selected at the Bologna Fair for the past three years (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Grimm Press Picture Books" 22). The excellent achievements of the Grimm

Press have encouraged other new local publishers in Taiwan to devote themselves to children's publishing.

More and more local publishers in Taiwan now devote themselves to children's literature, and it is true that the market for children's literature in Taiwan keeps steadily growing. But only recently were these publishers able to make their dreams come true and become successful. How local publishers of children's literature in Taiwan overcame the difficulties they have encountered to survive is the next thing we need to know.

Before 1990, readers in Taiwan could find few children's books in bookstores. Publishers were the first to pay attention and support children's literature in Taiwan. After World War II, Taiwan encountered financial problems and needed to concentrate on how to improve its economy. During that time, the publishing market was in a mess, and copyright was in a vague zone. Since the publishing market in general was weak, children's literature in Taiwan was badly hit. Local publishers in Taiwan not only had to fight a depressed economy but also had to protect their books from being illegally copied. Because of the problem in the economy and pirated copies, most children's books in Taiwan were of poor quality, for example, only single-color print on rough paper. Local publishers in Taiwan under this difficult situation had to find various sales approaches to create the market and get rid of pirated copies.

However, in the late 1980s, when copyright law started to appear in Taiwan, it was still

hard to convince all publishers to sell legally copied books because the government of Taiwan didn't thoroughly focus on protecting copyright. Therefore, some local publishers in Taiwan decided to sell children's books door to door or through mail order to protect their books from being illegally copied. The experience of Echo Publishing (漢聲出版) represents the difficulty that local publishers in Taiwan faced in the late 1980s. Echo Publishing got the rights from foreign authors and printed books in Hong Kong and Japan to get better quality. Since these two areas could provide better printing quality than Taiwan at that time, local publishers in Taiwan that wanted to produce their books better had to spend more to do so. However, when Echo Publishing brought these books back to Taiwan, they had to resist another bigger challenge: the pirated copy. Therefore, door-to-door sales and mail-order sales were the common sales channels in this situation.

Selling children's books door to door or through the mail had influenced the children's literature publishing market in Taiwan for a long time because under these methods there were only a few children's books being released through the bookstores. Children's books with higher quality could only be purchased door to door or through the mail, while most children could find books of lower quality in outlets.

Another problem that local publishers in Taiwan encountered was how to train professional door-to-door salesmen. Publishers needed to pay lots of money if they wanted to sell their books this way. But door-to-door sales also have the advantage of collecting

information on customers' demand for books. Local publishers in Taiwan can have firsthand information via the communication between door-to-door salesmen and customers. For example, the Formosan Magazine Press (台灣英文雜誌社) relied on “Echo Mamas (漢聲媽媽)” to do door-to-door sales in their neighborhoods, and they not only sold books but also exchanged opinions with parents. They reported parents' needs to the Formosan Magazine Press to improve its publications. Besides door-to-door sales and mail-order during the late 1980s and early 1990s, selling books in sets was another common way that publishers chose to protect their rights.

This method of selling books in sets is common in door-to-door and mail-order sales. Readers can only find a few sets in bookstores because some local publishers in Taiwan don't release these books. When books are sold in sets, it challenges buyers' will. This was especially true during the time when the economy was still on the road to recovery. For parents, it is a struggle to buy whole sets of children's books at one time, and the parents' decision under this struggle would cause reduced income to publishers. For these reasons the market of children's literature in Taiwan was limited. It's hard for local publishers in Taiwan to earn a living under this dual method. Not until recently, when the economy turned better, did publishers have a chance to continue their ideal.

## **II. Bookstores**

Publishers and bookstores are both booksellers although bookstores provide a more

relaxed environment for most readers. When salesmen come to the door, customers have to decide almost immediately whether to buy or not. Also, even though the unit price of each book in the sets is definitely cheaper, the total price would often make customers hesitate. Mail order is quick, but it lacks the enjoyable atmosphere of a bookstore. It seems that bookstores attract customers better than publishers. However, publishers own the most powerful weapon: they can offer books at lower prices than bookstores, and that is much more attractive to purchasers.

It is the lower price and convenience that enable publishers to attract customers to purchase via mail order. Mail-order can help publishers save lots of payments necessary to run bookstores, and it is also an advantage for purchasers because they not only can have a discount but also need not pay postage.

Even though door-to-door sales are needed to pay salaries to salesmen, the salary depends on how much they sell. The more books door-to-door salesmen can sell, the more both salesmen and publishers can earn. However, conversely, these methods limited the development of bookstores. Selling books door to door and through the mail have their advantages, but bookstores can show readers more books at one time. Local publishers in Taiwan used to have bookstores that showcased their publications. Running a bookstore requires customers to come and purchase in the stores. The more people who purchase books via mail order or through door-to-door sales, the less a bookstore can earn. Therefore, since

the early 1990s, there have been more and more local publishers in Taiwan trying to make their bookstores more attractive. These bookstores not only sell books but also create an atmosphere of reading to make customers stay in the stores. They no longer concentrate on adults' books only; children's literature is another main group they cater to.

For example, the Eastern Publishing Co. (東方出版社) owned the biggest children's bookstore in Taiwan in the early 1990s, but they still kept selling children's books in sets via mail order. The Eastern Publishing Co. reflected the unique situation of that time in Taiwan, when publishers still held the most market of children's books while bookstores tried to create their own way. It was also common among other local publishers in Taiwan who advocated for children's books: They started to create a specific area for children in their bookstores. Not only the bookstores supported by publishers, but also more and more individual bookstores and chains have started to join children's literature market in Taiwan. Both individual bookstores and chains focus more than ever on the children's literature section. Chains have to take care of all kinds of readers and must provide a variety of choices for them, while the owners of individual children's bookstores can create as many unique styles as they wish. Both of them have their advantages, and they lead readers in Taiwan to experience a whole new environment for appreciating children's literature. For example, the largest chain bookstores, Eslite (誠品) and Mami children's bookstore (媽咪兒童書店), the largest individual agent that imports Japanese picture books, both concentrate on children's

literature with their comfortable reading environments.

Eslite, opened in 1989, is the most famous bookstore chain in Taiwan with its elegant atmosphere and rich titles. Eslite now owns more than fifty shops around Taiwan, and the Dun-Nan store (敦南誠品), the main store of Eslite, is open 24 hours a day and has become the must-visit place for foreign visitors (Shemper 55). Eslite changes readers' notion that bookstores are just a place to buy books: they are a warm corner for readers to spend their time reading with other book lovers. In recent years, every new branch of Eslite must have a unique children's section. In 2006, Eslite opened the largest children's bookstore in Taipei. It extended the section of children's literature to every aspect of children's life, like Children's Museum of Taipei (台北兒童博物館). The main idea of this children's bookstore is to treat children like adults; Eslite wants to lead children in Taiwan to learn on the basis of enjoyment of children's literature.

Eslite is the pioneer of modern children's bookstores in Taiwan, and they lead other advocators to join this field for children. It is a good start for children's literature in Taiwan, and it shows how to keep readers coming back to bookstores, the main issue that bookstores need to consider.

### **III. Schools, Government, Awards**

Schools in Taiwan that provide classes and research for children's literature are still in the beginning stages. Only about twenty colleges provide courses related to children's

literature, while the National Taitung University (國立台東大學) is the only university that has established a master's degree in children's literature. The Graduate Institute of Children's Literature of National Taitung University, established in 1996, is a young institute composed of lots of people who are enthusiastic about children's literature. It holds lots of activities and seminars and exchanges information and knowledge with other colleges, publishers, and authors.

The government is a powerful institution that is available to push the development of children's literature in Taiwan. The Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan (行政院文化建設委員會) and the Government Information Office of Taiwan (行政院新聞局) are the two main administrative institutions that promote children's literature in Taiwan, and their concrete actions have led to great achievements. The Government Information Office of Taiwan has excellent recommended-reading lists for primary and middle school students and has held the Little Sun Award (小太陽獎) annually since 1996 to encourage authors of local children's literature in Taiwan. The winners of the Little Sun Award have the chance to promote their works at the Taipei International Books Fair and the Bologna Fair with help from the Government Information Office (Lin 38).

On the other hand, in order to help the children's publishing market in Taiwan focus on local children's literature more than on foreign children's literature, the Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan announced that 2000 would be “The Reading Year of Children (兒童閱讀

年)” (Hwu 39). The Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan also holds the annual “Modern Children's Literature Award (現代兒童文學獎),” and it is devoted to collecting local nursery rhymes created for children in Taiwan. Overall, it is the Taiwanese government's hope to preserve and create local children's literature at the same time that excellent foreign children's literature comes to Taiwan. However, before children in Taiwan experience the cultural shock of foreign children's literature, a strong local children's literature must be rooted in their hearts first.

Awards are usually the index that tells readers, especially adults who have no idea about what to choose for their children, what is worth reading. It is much easier for adults to purchase books for themselves because they can choose any book they like. However, most adults find it hard to buy books for children because they don't know what children's needs are or what children prefer, even though every adult was once a child. Awards thus play a useful role for purchasers, especially now when local and foreign children's literature in Taiwan are just beginning to take off. Most people trust a book with an award. An award is also an important indicator that tells publishers which books they should publish more of. For instance, Echo Publishing published the twelve-volume Echo Children's Encyclopedia (漢聲小百科), which introduced Chinese myths, legends, and folktales, in 1985. Echo Children's Encyclopedia won several awards in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan, and its success reminded local publishers in Taiwan that there really is a large market for children's literature

in Taiwan.

Awards not only bring advantages to publishers, but they also encourage authors. More and more local children's books in Taiwan, like The Mouse Bride: a Chinese Folktale mentioned above, have won international awards and really bring local children's literature in Taiwan to the world. Local awards for children's literature in Taiwan are what we can use to encourage more local authors to produce. Besides the Hsin Yi Picture Book Award, the Little Sun Award, and the Modern Children's Literature Award mentioned above, there are many other awards for local children's literature in Taiwan now that can provide chances for local authors to show their works. For example, the “Chiu Ko Modern Children's Literature Award (九歌現代兒童文學獎),” given by the Chiu Ko Cultural and Educational Foundation (九歌文教基金會), is the award that encourages local authors of young adult fiction in Taiwan. Local authors of children's literature in Taiwan who want to bring their work to readers can try for awards to promote themselves.

#### **IV. Authors**

Before introducing some excellent authors of local children's literature in Taiwan, the current development of the children's literature market in Taiwan for these authors is what I want to discuss first.

Authors who want to work for local children's literature in Taiwan need lots of support from the whole publishing environment. They need awards or professional activities, like the

annual Taipei International Books Fair, to enhance their confidence. As mentioned previously, the Hsin Yi Foundation holds the Hsin Yi Picture Book Awards to encourage local authors in Taiwan. With the Hsin Yi Foundation's enthusiasm, local writers and illustrators in Taiwan found another channel by which to publish their work.

The other important development is that more and more local publishers in Taiwan started to publish English editions of local authors' work. This step not only provides customers another option for purchasing, but also opens the door for local writers and illustrators of children's literature to show their works to the world. However, there is one question that needs to be considered: Is the children's literature market in Taiwan large enough to support these authors?

With the combined efforts of local publishers and bookstores, children's literature can spread in Taiwan quickly. The difficulty of protecting foreign children's literature from being copied illegally can be overcome by publishers. How to increase the number of titles of local children's literature in Taiwan is another question entirely. It is true that now the amount of foreign children's literature in Taiwan, no matter whether in original or translated editions, is larger than that of local children's literature in Taiwan. The source of the problem is that we still do not have enough authors in the field of local children's literature in Taiwan. The basic issue is that many local writers and illustrators in Taiwan have to explore the creative road themselves because there is no professional academic body that can provide training for them

systematically. Besides, the market of children's literature in Taiwan is so small that only a few authors can stay in this field to work for children in Taiwan (Chen, Ya-Li 17).

A country with a large market of children's literature can support its local authors easily if the authors really have great work for readers. Therefore, publishers can nourish writers and illustrators and help them concentrate on this field without worrying about their futures. Today in Taiwan, we don't have the same conditions as other countries. We can extend the market and provide good training to solve the problem of the lack of authors of local children's literature in the future, but now the problem has already existed there for a long time, and it influences authors so much.

As mentioned in Chapter One, there are lots of excellent people in Taiwan working on foreign comics and films; however, most of them can't concentrate on creating local art for children in Taiwan because of real-life problems: Their incomes cannot support them in realizing their dreams. Only a few of these people of talent are devoted to working for children in Taiwan without considering the market. Chen, Chih-Yuan (陳致元), one of the excellent authors devoted to children's literature in Taiwan, is the one who realized his dream of children's literature in this difficult environment.

Chen, Chih-Yuan, whose picture book On My Way to Buy Eggs (小魚散步) won the 13th Hsin Yi Picture Book Award, the Bologna Fair Award, and the Publishers Weekly Best Children's Book 2003, once admitted his concern about the economy in an interview. Chen,

Chih-Yuan is a young author who has the will and ability to create for children in Taiwan.

However, his income from publishing his picture books in Taiwan could not support him in fulfilling his dream (Li, Yi-Rong 44).

Chen, Chih-Yuan's situation is representative of that of most other writers and illustrators of local children's literature in Taiwan. They need not only the awards to encourage them but also an income from the market to support them. Support from publishers can certainly help these talented authors, but it is the entire environment only that can decide the development of local children's literature in Taiwan. The challenges that these writers and illustrators encounter are only the tip of the iceberg of local children's literature in Taiwan.

How to improve the environment to perfect local children's literature in Taiwan is the problem we need to solve. This question is tightly connected with the whole market of children's literature in Taiwan, and we can learn from the experience of foreign countries that have well-developed children's literature, so this will be discussed more in Chapter Four.

There are still many other talented newcomers who devote themselves to local children's literature in Taiwan, and Lai, Ma (賴馬, 賴建名) is a famous one. His first picture book, I Turned into a Fire-Breathing Dragon (我變成一隻噴火龍了), won the Mu-Di Award (國語日報牧迪獎), established by the Mandarin Daily News (國語日報社), in 1995. From then on, many of his books have been honored by different kinds of local children's literature awards in Taiwan, and he remains an important role model in the children's literature market in

Taiwan.

Lai, Ma gives a new idea to introduce his picture book The Day I Got Up Early (早起的一天), published in 2002. This book was published in a set of three parts: one Chinese edition, one English edition, translated by John Balcom, and one CD on which the story is read. This is a fresh sale style in the children's literature market in Taiwan. The CD provides another way to enjoy this story, and the English edition can help introduce this picture book overseas. Moreover, the cover page of this picture book gives it a clear Chinese face: a Chinese word “早” (means “early” or “good morning”) composed of twenty-four little pigs. Lai, Ma uses this hint to tell the origin of this picture book while we try to introduce local children's literature in Taiwan to other countries.

Besides picture books, young adult fiction is another major genre of children's literature. However, there are still few local authors who focus on young-adult fiction in Taiwan, while more and more writers and illustrators are creating picture books for children.

Li, Tong (李潼, 本名賴西安, 1953-2004) is an important writer of local young-adult fiction in Taiwan. He wrote over fifty books in his life, and most of his works are based on local culture in Taiwan. His fiction, Boy of Kavalan (少年噶瑪蘭), describes how a young boy of the Kavalan tribe in Taiwan finds the honor of being a member of an indigenous people. This book is important for children in Taiwan, especially indigenous ones, because now there are only a few children's books written for indigenous children in Taiwan. The issue of writing

for indigenous children in Taiwan is another important point I will discuss in Chapter Four. Li, Tong devoted all his life to creating young-adult fiction for children in Taiwan. However, we need still more writers to enrich this field, and we need to focus on how to nourish more authors for local children's literature in Taiwan. This will also be explored more in Chapter Four.

Besides these advocators, there are also many other associations and individuals who have joined the work of promoting children's literature in Taiwan. The Taipei International Books Fair is one of the main achievements.

The Taipei International Books Fair is promoted by the Government Information Office with support from most publishers in Taiwan (Chen, Jia-Shu, "The Taipei International Books Fair" 15). This exhibition not only attracts lots of foreign publishers to join and bring excellent works here, but also provides a chance to introduce local publications of Taiwan to them. In the thirteenth exhibition, in 2005, the Taipei Books Festival Foundation, the sponsor, cut the exhibition into four sections: general, international, comic, and children. The individual section of children's publishing shows the importance of children's reading in Taiwan today. It is the achievement of all advocators who have devoted themselves to children's literature in Taiwan in recent years.

Enthusiastic publishers, excellent bookstores, awards, and talented writers and illustrators--Taiwan now has the basic elements to develop its own local children's literature.

However, the work to promote local children's literature in Taiwan is still hard because some of these elements are still not mature enough. It takes time to accumulate our own experiences of publishing children's literature and perfect them, and the best way to make us strong quickly is to learn from foreign works.

For example, the most common blind spot of local children's literature in Taiwan is that of limited issues. Local children's literature in Taiwan tends to tell about love and the kind of filial piety that can lead children to being nice people. This is definitely great for children. However, there are more and more social problems growing with the change of time, and children will probably face them in their daily lives someday. Issues such as homosexuality, violence, drugs, etc., are common in foreign children's literature, and these various issues give children a chance to have the concept for a world they never know. Using these children's books well is a good tool to ease children's tension about the unknown. These social issues are not taboos in local children's literature in Taiwan, but there are only a few children's books that touch on them. We need all kinds of issues to enrich children's literature for children in Taiwan. In order to solve this problem, we must learn from foreign children's literature.

Besides the problem of limited issues, there are still other lessons that we can learn from foreign children's literature to improve ourselves. This point, learning from others and keeping ourselves in the mainstream, will be explored in more depth in Chapter Four.

### **CHAPTER 3: FOREIGN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TAIWAN**

With a variety of issues, changing styles, and high quality, foreign children's literature creates a culture shock in Taiwan and yet enriches children's lives. However, there are still some problems we need to pay attention to. Foreign children's literature in Taiwan is not always original. Part of it is translated into Chinese, and the quality of the translation decides the fate of this foreign children's literature in Taiwan publishing market. The price of foreign children's literature is usually higher than local children's literature in Taiwan, and the high price challenges customers' desire to purchase. Therefore, not every child has the chance to enjoy foreign children's literature. Other difficulties, such as readers' English ability, are problems that need to be solved.

The improper text in foreign children's literature is another important problem I will point out in this chapter. Foreign children's literature has a variety of issues, and most of them are under the verification of publishers. However, there is still a part of foreign children's literature that is imported to Taiwan without censorship, such as comics imported by small publishers. Even though some books are classified as only for adults, the cheap price and easy availability makes them readily available to children. How to show the advantages and disadvantages of foreign children's literature in Taiwan is the issue I will discuss in this chapter.

Before starting to discuss the role that foreign children's literature plays in Taiwan, it is

important to make clear the kind of books that I think can be designated as foreign children's literature. Foreign children's literature that I define in this research includes original editions and translated editions of any children's books that are originally written in any language except Chinese. No matter whether publishers import the original edition directly from other countries or print the translated edition in Chinese, children's literature that is originally created by foreign authors who are not people in Taiwan, written in a foreign language, and based on foreign cultures is defined as foreign children's literature.

In this research, children's literature from others Chinese areas, like Hong Kong, Singapore, and mainland China, is not regarded as foreign children's literature. Even though languages and cultures in these Chinese areas are slightly different from those in Taiwan, basically the notion of culture and the philosophy of life in all Chinese children's literature are toward the same direction. Therefore, children's literature from these Chinese areas will not be discussed in this chapter.

### **Foreign Children's Literature Available in Taiwan**

What foreign children's literature is available in Taiwan today? This question can be discussed by considering two issues: The available titles of foreign children's literature in Taiwan and publishing outlets that provide foreign children's literature.

Only in the past twenty years have local publishers begun to introduce foreign children's literature to the children's publishing market in Taiwan. In the beginning, only a

few local publishers in Taiwan tried to promote foreign children's literature with enthusiasm. For example, the New Schoolmate Company, one of the publishers devoted to children's publishing, began to import European and Japanese children's literature to Taiwan in 1986. The New Schoolmate Company and other local publishers in Taiwan, had to face the challenges of readers' notions, parents' budgets for purchasing books for children, and other problems that might exist. Based on the parents' notions, foreign children's books that won certain awards or provided “useful knowledge” were the main titles that local publishers in Taiwan would choose to sell first. Local publishers in Taiwan that wanted to publish children's literature of special topics or styles might face the problem of sales. It is a long and hard way for these local publishers in Taiwan to fight with parents' requirements of children's literature in Taiwan.

There are more titles of foreign children's literature in Taiwan now than twenty years ago. However, it is our hope to make these titles even more popular. I will discuss this problem of limited titles of foreign children's literature in Taiwan later in this chapter.

Local publishers in Taiwan now try to pay more attention to foreign children's literature and allow readers to get these imported books more easily. Bookstores are the most common places that provide foreign children's literature for readers in Taiwan. For example, Eslite is the largest bookstore chain in Taiwan that provides foreign children's literature. Eslite divides children's literature into several sections: young-adult fiction, picture books,

multimedia, preschool learning, arts, science, etc., Every genre of foreign children's literature, no matter whether it is the original or a Chinese edition, can be easily found. Eslite also provides toys for infants, pop-up books, and other special materials for children imported from abroad. It is Eslite's goal to build a comfortable reading world not only for children but also for adults' needs. Eslite mainly focuses on popular titles for children in Taiwan because of the market's needs. There are also some individual foreign children's literature bookstores that provide unique children's books in some main cities in Taiwan. These bookstores of different management styles try to provide various and complete foreign children's literature for children in Taiwan in their daily lives.

Besides bookstores, there are some other publishing outlets that make foreign children's literature easily available in Taiwan today. As mentioned in Chapter One, the annual Taipei International Books Fair is the largest book festival in Taiwan, and children's literature and comics are two main sections in this festival. At the Taipei International Books Fair, adults and children can find foreign children's books that are not commonly seen anywhere else. Moreover, some publishers and bookstores also provide online shopping that allows readers to purchase foreign children's literature easily. Libraries in most areas in Taiwan also provide free foreign children's literature for people.

It is now much easier for people to purchase or get information on foreign children's literature in Taiwan with various choices. However, there is still part of foreign children's

literature in Taiwan that is not released to these common channels, like books in sets sold door to door. On the other hand, even though titles of foreign children's literature seem to be getting various now, most local publishers in Taiwan tend to choose books with the promotion of awards. Introducing books that won awards is certainly good for children in Taiwan, but it might limit children's knowledge of other books without the promotion of awards. This question will also be discussed in more depth later when I discuss the problem of foreign children's literature in Taiwan.

### **The Importance and Necessity of Having Foreign Children's Literature in Taiwan**

As mentioned in Chapter Two, under the pressure of education and parents' expectations, children's literature in Taiwan had limited topics for a long time. Reading materials for children in Taiwan concentrated on school learning and some topics that parents thought "necessary and useful" for their children. In recent years the economic condition of Taiwan has been improved and parents can accept children's books that contain topics they thought not necessary before. The children's publishing market in Taiwan is now starting to ask for books with various styles and topics. However, it still takes a long time for local writers and illustrators in Taiwan to produce numbers of titles of various issues for local children's literature in Taiwan. Therefore, foreign children's literature with various styles and topics can help to enrich what we lack in local children's literature in Taiwan. Even if someday in the future local children's literature in Taiwan reaches its fullest achievement and

we can satisfy the needs of a local children's publishing market completely, we will still need foreign children's literature to show children what it is like in the real world and bring them experiences that might induce a cultural shock but that are necessary.

Foreign children's literature has been well developed with lots of excellent authors for a much longer time than local children's literature in Taiwan. The quality of foreign children's literature now is better than the average quality of local children's literature in Taiwan, no matter the printing skills or authors' ideas. Before Taiwan reaches a level equal to that of foreign children's literature, foreign children's literature certainly can be the model for the publishing market to lead within Taiwan.

It is necessary to have foreign children's literature to enrich the children's publishing market in Taiwan. These advantages and experiences of foreign children's literature that can provide Taiwan a road to follow will be discussed in Chapter Four in more depth.

### **What Difficulties and Problems of Foreign Children's Literature in Taiwan Are and How the Situation Can Be Improved**

In recent years, foreign children's literature started to play an important role in the children's publishing market in Taiwan. When we enjoy what foreign children's literature brings to us, difficulties and problems come with these advantages, too. Some have been improved with our efforts, while others still take place and we need to pay more attention to them.

## I. Limited Titles

As mentioned in Chapter One, Japanese comics have been the most common foreign children's books of translated editions in Taiwan for a long time. Almost every kind of comic has a fan base in Taiwan; therefore, titles of comics are always various. Besides Japanese comics, titles of foreign children's literature in Taiwan are limited because of the purchasing habits of most customers. Foreign children's literature with any promotion of awards and those that are the original stories of movies are the most common titles released in Taiwan today.

Many titles of foreign children's literature released in Taiwan are books that are adapted for movies, such as the Harry Potter and the Narnia series. Before the movie version of Harry Potter came out, there were only original editions of the books available in Taiwan, not translated ones. An edition of Narnia was available, but the translation was incomplete. Only The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, in a Chinese edition, had been published by the Tien-Wei Publishing Company (天衛文化) in 1994. But after the Harry Potter phenomenon, the whole series of Narnia became available in a Chinese edition published by the Titan Publishing Co. (大田出版社) in 2002. Movie adaptations made these two foreign children's literature texts famous in Taiwan, and local publishers in Taiwan now have the confidence to promote them and others further. As a result, most customers in Taiwan tend to choose well-known foreign children's literature first.

What about less famous foreign children's literature? It is a struggle for local publishers in Taiwan to release great but not famous foreign children's literature in translation. If publishers find certain titles they want to introduce to the local children's literature market in Taiwan, it's simple to import a small amount of the original edition to test the market. Publishing foreign children's literature in a Chinese edition challenges more because it requires some other budget, like printing. If the response of the market failed, publishing a Chinese edition of foreign children's literature would be a wrong step for publishers. Therefore, most local publishers in Taiwan tend to import foreign children's literature of original edition first and choose the famous one to publish in a Chinese edition.

However, having foreign children's literature of original edition is important but not enough. Without Chinese editions available in the children's publishing market in Taiwan, children who can't read the original edition lose the chance to enjoy these stories. The whole foreign children's literature market in Taiwan seems to be rich with various titles of original editions. However, for children in Taiwan who can't read on original edition, foreign children's literature still has limited titles when they can only find a few foreign children's literature titles of Chinese edition.

Fortunately, now some local publishers in Taiwan have begun to release some excellent but not famous foreign children's books of Chinese edition. They try to provide children in Taiwan who can't read the edition well an equal chance to enjoy foreign children's

literature, regardless of the challenge that might be brought by the purchasing market. The Heryin Publishing Inc. (和英出版社) is one of these publishers that has started to introduce excellent children's literature they found in the foreign children's publishing market without strong award promotion. For example, The Salamander Room (小鱉蠃睡哪裡), written by Anne Mazer and illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher, has normal sales and no awards to promote it in the United States, but the Heryin Publishing Inc. decided to publish a Chinese edition of this picture book in Taiwan because they believed this book was what is needed for children in Taiwan (Chen, Jia-Shu, "The Pleasant of Picture Books" 18). It is a challenge for local publishers in Taiwan to test the market, but it is the children's luck to have the chance to appreciate various styles of foreign children's literature.

There is a long way to go for most local publishers in Taiwan to change their notions about choosing books, but now we are moving toward this direction with a brighter future. Titles of foreign children's literature, no matter whether famous or not, original or translated edition, will be complete and various in children's publishing market in Taiwan someday.

## **II. Copyright**

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the lack of copyright protection is a serious problem for local publishers in Taiwan. Local publishers in Taiwan use mail order, door-to-door sales, and books in sets to prevent their children's books from being copied illegally. Even though the notion of copyright protection began in the early 1990s, local publishers in Taiwan still need

to fight with foreign publishers who don't have sufficient confidence in the publishing environment in Taiwan.

Foreign publishers didn't trust local publishers in Taiwan without the protection of copyright in the 60s and 70s. The experience of the China Times Publishing Company (時報出版) shows how hard local publishers in Taiwan had to fight to get rights from foreign publishers. The China Times Publishing Company spent two months negotiating an original copy of a Japanese original book, 25 Letters from a Business Father to His Daughter.

However, the pirated copy was released to the market before they published the authorized one. Not until recent years, when the notion of copyright protection has been well promoted in Taiwan, have foreign publishers wanted to work with Taiwan.

We can say now that this problem has been solved, but it has left an effect: the way copyright affects the quality of translation. Local publishers in Taiwan needed to shorten the time spent on translating in order to release books before the pirated editions came out. Under the pressure of time, the quality of translation might not have been perfect. Therefore, foreign children's literature was available in Taiwan, but the quality of translation needed to be improved greatly. Now, the problem of translation brought by copyright almost passes this transition, but there are still some new problems of translation that we have to pay attention to. These new problems will be discussed in the issue of translation later in this chapter.

### **III. English Ability and the Attitude of Adults**

Foreign children's literature in Taiwan exists in all kinds of languages, like Japanese and Korean. Among all languages, English is now the most common language in the world. Therefore, if children in Taiwan want to read original foreign children's literature, English is the first choice for them. When stepping into the children's section of most bookstores in Taiwan, however, it is clear that original titles, including English editions, may be rich in number but poor in total quality. Even though foreign children's literature in Chinese editions may have fewer titles, the total number of Chinese editions is still greater than that of the original editions. One of the reasons is that the English ability of most children in Taiwan is still not sufficient for reading original editions by themselves. In other words, children in Taiwan still rely on Chinese editions to enjoy foreign children's literature but do not read original editions of foreign children's literature directly.

According to the announcement from the Ministry of Education of Taiwan, Taiwan pushed the policy to start English courses for fifth- and sixth-grade students, about ten to eleven years old, in 2001. Before that, most children in Taiwan started to learn English when they were twelve years old, in junior high school. The notion of leading young children in Taiwan to learn English is now growing but still needs more effort. Before most children in Taiwan can read original editions of foreign children's literature in English by themselves, adults, especially parents, need to try harder to make connections between children and

original foreign children's literature. If children themselves have sufficient language ability to read the original editions, adults can let children read by themselves, or adults should take the responsibility to guide children. Here, the language ability of adults, especially parents and teachers, plays an important role in leading children to read.

Ninety percent of children's books in Taiwan are sold to parents; therefore, parents' English ability decides how deeply their children contact with the original editions of foreign children's literature. If adults can only read Chinese, the Chinese edition of a foreign children's book is the one they will tend to choose for their children (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Pictures Books Build the Bridge"12). If parents only give their children foreign children's literature translated into Chinese, and not the original editions, before children have the sufficient foreign language ability to read by themselves, children will lose the chance to develop interest in reading and the confidence to read these books. Foreign children's literature can enrich the children's publishing market in Taiwan, and the original foreign children's literature can't be replaced by translations. While we start to improve children's English ability in school, leading parents to grow with their children is the other side of this issue we can never ignore.

Even though there is a long way to go to improve children's English speaking and reading abilities, we still have to insist on this important goal in Taiwan. Both foreign children's literature in the original language and Chinese editions are important. Children in

Taiwan certainly can choose foreign children's literature in Chinese editions to read, but reading the original editions of foreign children's literature is a chance to practice and improve English. Moreover, some problems still hide in Chinese editions of foreign children's literature in Taiwan, and this is the next issue to be discussed.

#### **IV. Translation**

The unstable quality of translation is another problem caused by the lack of confidence in the copyright law in the early 1900s in Taiwan. Now, with the protection of copyright and people's awareness of it, local publishers in Taiwan can spend more time translating faithfully. It is our ideal that conscientious local publishers in Taiwan can achieve their goal, but there are others factors that influence the quality of translation.

More and more foreign children's books have shown up in the publishing market in recent years, and it's true that some of these books are not good, quality translations. Foreign children's literature published by credible publishers certainly can mostly maintain the quality of translation, but part of it, such as Manga (comic books) and magazines, which need to catch up the deadline in a short time, easily make mistakes in translation. It is these publishers' duty to keep the translation faithful and of high quality because even a small flaw brings the wrong learning for children who read these books. To avoid this possible problem of mistranslating, purchasers of foreign children's literature can choose to buy the original edition or read the Chinese edition carefully by themselves before giving it to children.

Even though now most foreign children's books in Taiwan are translated faithfully and are also high in quality, it is a pity that children cannot read the original editions by themselves. Children might lose the opportunity to appreciate the joy that the original language brings. They are forced to accept any change in the text that publishers make in a translation.

For example, the ending of the picture book The Story of the Little Mole (是誰嗯嗯在我的頭上), originally written by Werner Holzwarth and illustrated by Wolf Erlbruch, is changed in the Chinese edition published in Taiwan. The publisher, the 3&3 International Institutes Crop (三之三國際), believes the ending of the original story doesn't "fit" the feeling of the citizenry of Taiwan and might reflect an improper example for children. In the English edition of The Story of the Little Mole, the little mole poops on the animal's head that poops on his head first, and the little mole does it just for revenge. However, the little mole's revenge in the end is changed in the Chinese edition: In the Chinese edition, he says he is sorry for what he did. Werner Holzwarth gives the story this ending in the original story as a funny point and believes most readers can accept it, but the 3&3 International Institutes Crop has a different opinion on the ending. They think revenge is not good for children to learn when they read this book, so they make the little mole apologize for what he has done and hope this modified ending is a good message for young readers. Both endings have their good qualities.

Besides texts, the translation of book titles is the other main task before publishers release a translated edition. If local publishers in Taiwan find something wrong with the translated names of books after they publish them, they need to republish these books in order to be responsible. There are two examples of this case: Inga Moore's Six Dinner Sid and Lois Lowry's The Giver.

The Chinese edition of Inga Moore's Six Dinner Sid was published by Heryin Publishing (和英出版社) in 2000. When the Chinese edition first came out in November 2000, Heryin Publishing changed the original title from Six Dinner Sid to The Cat Living on Philosophy Street (住在哲學街上的貓). The idea of this new title comes from this story's happening between two streets named after the famous philosophers Aristotle and Pythagoras. It was the good intention of Heryin Publishing to give this picture book a new name. However, it didn't work better than the original one. The original story, Six Dinner Sid, contains the main idea of this story more and quickly attracts readers at first sight. It doesn't matter if the publisher wins more customer attention or readers appreciate the fun that the title can bring, the original name, Six Dinner Sid, is better than the new one, The Cat Living on Philosophy Street. Therefore, in the beginning of 2001, Heryin Publishing decided to return the original name to this picture book and had a similar translation title in Chinese for it: Six Dinner Cat (吃六頓晚餐的貓). Here, it is better to use "Cat" than "Sid" in the Chinese title because it is closer to Chinese usage.

The other example of a title changed in translation is the Chinese edition of Lois Lowry's The Giver. This story was released in 1994, and the Zhi-Mao Press (智茂文化), a publisher in Taiwan, published the Chinese edition in 1995. However, the Chinese edition of The Giver was retitled The Receiver of Memory (記憶受領員). It was not until 2002 that the Eastern Publishing Co. (東方出版社), another publisher in Taiwan, republished The Giver with its correct title. It is hard to trace why the Zhi-Mao Press decided to change the original title of The Giver (記憶傳授人). No matter whether a case of mistranslating or promoting this book by focusing on the protagonist, Jonas the receiver of memory; different titles of one book definitely confuse readers. This is what publishers need to pay more attention to before they release translated titles.

These three examples above, The Story of the Little Mole, Six Dinner Sid, and The Giver, show that translating foreign children's literature is not a simple work to translate just word by word. Publishers and translators need to find a more proper usage of language to introduce this foreign children's literature to children in Taiwan. On the other hand, while publishers and translators focus on keeping the quality in translation, they can make certain slight changes based on the agreement of authors in order to fit the readers' feeling. However, translating faithfully without changing the main idea too much is what publishers and translators need to do. If we modify too much, we rewrite but not translate this foreign children's literature.

Introducing various styles of foreign children's literature to children in Taiwan to redeem what we lack is the main reason why we rely on foreign children's literature. If we just want to modify foreign children's literature into local style in Taiwan, then we just need to develop local children's literature in Taiwan to achieve this intention. Letting foreign children's literature keep its spirit without unfaithful translation is what we need to strive for when we decide to borrow its experience to enrich children's reading in Taiwan.

Previously discussed are some of the challenges involved in translation that face to translated, copyrighted books. It is publishers' and translators' responsibilities to improve in this area. However, there is one more problem that exists in the translation market: the private translation by normal readers without authorization by publishers or authors. This trouble is common online today, and it usually happens to two kinds of books: books without translated editions available in market and more popular titles.

If readers find some original foreign books they appreciate but no translated edition of them available in the market, they may try to translate these books by themselves and post them online to share with other readers who do not have enough foreign language ability to read the original editions. The other situation is that some original books will have translated editions in the future, but they are so popular and famous that readers can hardly wait for two months or longer until the translated editions come out. Therefore, readers who read these popular books first may translate and post them online before publishers release the translated

editions with copyright to the market.

This trouble of translation without authorization that can be found online also happens in the children's publishing market in Taiwan. It doesn't mean that all private translation comes from people in Taiwan. However, with the convenience of the Internet, it is easy for children to read these privately translated books online from any other Chinese areas. For example, Robert Cormier's I am the Cheese was well known in the West but not in Taiwan before the Chinese edition was published by the Tien-Wei Publishing Company in 2002. However, it was easy to search for the Chinese edition of this book, translated by readers online, before the authorized Chinese edition released to the market. Readers do the translation by themselves before they know there will be the formal Chinese edition available in the future.

Hot-selling books are another group that are translated privately. The Harry Potter books are a famous series that have several privately translated editions available online because many readers can hardly wait for the next one to be released. These privately translated editions are now a problem for publishers all over the world because they are hard to trace and ban. Besides the poor quality of the translations, privately translated editions also bring disadvantage to publishers and reduce the market. Even though these people do the translation of their own will and free of charge, the problem we worry about is that the quality will be hard to control without publishers and translators' professional experiences.

The children's publishing market in Taiwan is no exception when it comes to the issue of translation. It is our responsibility to lead our children to read the authorized translated editions released by publishers.

We need to promote the notion of reading authorized books, but it is hard to prevent all readers from posting their translations online. The convenience of the Internet causes not only this problem but also improper text in children's literature, which will be discussed latter in this chapter.

## **V. Available Channels**

One of the reasons some foreign children's books can't be widely available in bookstores is that publishers decide to sell them in sets door to door and through the mail. Publishers believe that it is hard for a single title in Taiwan to afford a large budget, but only has a little display space in book stores, especially those without any award to promote them.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, when local publishers in Taiwan sell their books door-to-door and through the mail, it limits the market. These books in sets are usually foreign children's literature of higher quality. Because of the higher value of these books, publishers decide to sell them in sets but not separately in bookstores in order to lower the possibility of damage and make sure they have a better chance to be promoted by door-to-door salesmen's introduction. Purchasers who have no chance to meet door-to-door salesmen or cannot afford a large budget to buy the whole set would lose their right to

appreciate these foreign children's books.

To solve this problem, both local publishers and bookstores in Taiwan need to have confidence in the children's books market. Local publishers in Taiwan must change their notions and release their products to the bookstore even if some books would be stocked in the bookstore for a long time and some of them may be damaged. Releasing sets of books to bookstores not only gives publishers another way to increase their sales if they can accept the rate of damage, but also provides the chance for more readers to enjoy more options, especially when most sets have higher quality than most children's books in bookstores. It is the publishers' responsibility to enrich every child's life but not to provide books only to children whose parents can afford it. Local publishers in Taiwan must educate themselves to be the culture deliverers, not just business men.

On the other hand, local bookstores in Taiwan should act themselves as a paradise for children, not only as booksellers. Bookstores must realize that they are the media where most children in Taiwan can find reading materials to enrich their childhood. Many bookstores in Taiwan now start their sales in this way. They frequently set small children's book exhibitions in the main section of the bookstores. For example, Eslite is the one that has promoted foreign children's literature by holding a large exhibition every year in recent years. Every year, Eslite chooses the top 100 original foreign picture books and a large number of excellent original foreign young-adult fictions for readers in Taiwan. Eslite also mails direct

positive messages to schools, libraries, and families. This large exhibition usually lasts for one month. It provides purchasers in Taiwan, who don't know how to choose original foreign children's literature, a nice chance to step into this field. This exhibition increases the reading population of original foreign children's literature in Taiwan and extends the market of foreign children's literature successfully.

## **VI. Improper Texts**

The various styles and topics of foreign children's literature bring a new energy to the local children's publishing market in Taiwan. Even though some issues come from different cultures, like the issue on Africa American children in the United States, which children in Taiwan might not understand them very well, it is a culture shock these children's books can bring to children in Taiwan to extend their thought beyond this small island. Therefore, any topic in foreign children's literature is worthy of being introduced to children in Taiwan if we can use it well. However, there are some improper texts hidden in this foreign children's literature that would affect children's minds.

Modern issues, such as homosexuality, violence, and drugs, are not what I mean by “improper” here. These issues truly exist in the real world we live in, and children must face them someday in their lives. For example, there are hundreds of children’s books banned in the United States, and they each raise arguments. Some voices of opposition say that certain plots in children's books, like suicide in Lois Lowry's The Giver, are improper for children to

read. However, these books are still popular in the whole world because it is not a negative philosophy of life these children's books stress. Issues in these banned books are unique and full of arguments but not improper. These stories are created from the different angles that normal people seldom would see, and they bring inspiration to readers. With proper writing skill and illustrations, children's literature could be the reflection of life that teaches children how to face problems positively when they encounter them.

It is how authors tell the story but not the story itself that makes these books improper for children. For example, many foreign comics contain erotic texts, and some books may describe violence in too much detail and unnecessarily. Most of these children's books are published by small local publishers in Taiwan who do not pay much attention to censoring the contents. These local publishers in Taiwan certainly know these books are improper for children, but they sell them regardless of the influence to children. Generally speaking, if local publishers in Taiwan want to promote certain titles for a long time without arguments from the publishing market, they must check and make sure the text is acceptable for readers before they publish. These comics and books contain improper texts that are below average quality and sold at lower prices. Even though the government of Taiwan classifies the publications into two categories, general and restricted, children still can buy them easily in some convenience stores and small bookstores that do not follow the rule seriously.

To reduce this problem that may bring harm to children, local publishers in Taiwan

should ask themselves not to release these books with improper texts. Booksellers in Taiwan that have books sold to readers above eighteen years of age only must insist on this rule. It is hard to refuse the coming business. However, it is our responsibility to insist on protecting our children from improper reading materials before they have the ability to choose what's good for them.

The Zhong-Lun branch of the Taipei Public Library (中崙圖書館) is an institution that takes the rule of classification seriously. The Zhong-Lun branch of the Taipei Public Library is the first library that focuses on collecting comics available in Taiwan, no matter whether they are foreign comics or local ones. Even though a library doesn't make money from readers, the Zhong-Lun branch of the Taipei Public Library still works hard to prevent children in Taiwan from reading improper comics. In the open space of the library, restricted comics are not shown in public. Readers who want to read these restricted comics have to inquire about titles first, then register to borrow the comics they want. Moreover, when purchasing new titles, libraries have to read first and then classify again even though most comics are already classified by publishers (Li, Shin-Ru, "Reading Comics" 17-18). The Zhong-Lun branch of the Taipei Public Library is the model to follow to keep children's literature proper and safe for children in Taiwan, and this is what we hope other institutions and booksellers, too, will do.

These works are what we can do to reduce the amount of books with improper texts

available in the concrete purchasing market. However, as mentioned previously on the issue of translation, the Internet is another channel where children can read electronic books easily, including books with improper texts. Definitely, this problem of improper electronic books available for children online not only happens with foreign children's literature but also with local children's literature in Taiwan. It is hard to ban readers from posting their private translation or books with improper texts online because of the vague zone between human right and copyright. However, the government of Taiwan definitely has the right to stop them. The government of Taiwan has to show the power to make electronic children's books online appropriate for children.

Previously I focused on children's literature with visible improper texts, such as erotic graphics in comics. If we consider this issue from a more critical angle, children's literature without positive themes that brings a vague philosophy of life might also confuse children. This kind of children's literature is not improper but should be used more carefully with children.

What does "a book without positive themes" mean? For example, the famous "The Little Match Girl" (Andersen) is close to this kind of story. In this story, a poor, hungry little girl stood in the snowy night selling matches. No one paid attention to her, and the little girl died lonely in the end. This story is so famous all over the world, and children in Taiwan also know it well. However, it is hard to find a positive lesson in the story for educating children.

Why does an innocent little girl need to earn a living alone in the cold night? How cruel the other people are to leave her standing alone with hunger. The little girl does nothing wrong, but she dies without any care from others. This kind of children's literature seems to be normal at first glance, but it is an unfair story if we consider this story deeply. We can say that unfairness truly happens in the world, and children will know it sooner or later in their lives. However, it is the function of leading children to face their lives positively and happily that we hope children's literature can have. Even though sometimes good does not eliminate evil in other children's literature either, it is the will of never giving up that children can learn from books.

Children's literature like "The Little Match Girl" would be simply a story without positive learning after children read it. We cannot say that this problem never happens to local children's literature in Taiwan. As mentioned in Chapter One, however, parents in Taiwan tended to choose children's books with "useful" lessons for their children in the past. Even though recently parents' notions have improved and they are will to try to introduce different issues to their children, children's books with meaningful inspirations are still titles that local publishers in Taiwan choose to promote first. Therefore, most children's literature in Taiwan still focuses on positive themes. Foreign children's literature is basically created with free ideas based on real life, and issues like that certainly exist in the world we live in. There is nothing wrong with this kind of children's literature, but it is hope that we want children to

keep in their hearts when we choose foreign children's literature to enrich their little worlds.

### **Expectation for Foreign Children's Literature in Taiwan**

Foreign children's literature is definitely important and necessary for children in Taiwan. Even though there are some existing difficulties and problems they might bring to the children's publishing market in Taiwan, we still sincerely welcome them. Undoubtedly, foreign children's literature brings high quality to the children's publishing market in Taiwan, but there is still much more room for us to improve this field. The difficulties and problems that have existed in foreign children's literature discussed previously can be overcome with our efforts.

Besides solving these problems, we can try some other ways to complete this market, such as inviting foreign authors to Taiwan. Selling foreign children's books in Taiwan is not enough. It is what we can learn from the experience of foreign children's literature to make local children's literature in Taiwan strong that we expect. How we can follow foreign children's literature and create our own way for local children's literature in Taiwan is what will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4: LEARNING FROM OTHERS AND KEEPING US IN THE MAINSTREAM**

Taiwan needs various styles of children's literature to enrich children's imagination, not only because Taiwan needs to develop a global perspective for children, but also because Taiwan has to learn from foreign children's literature to improve social conditions in Taiwan. Some issues are seldom seen in local children's literature in Taiwan, such as the increasing of a multicultural population, family problems, and dark sides of social life, but are truly developed well in foreign children's books. Taiwan can and must learn from foreign experience. However, Taiwan can't always use foreign children's literature to educate children in Taiwan. It is our duty to learn from foreign children's literature and create local children's literature in Taiwan at the same time.

Taiwan certainly can borrow the experience of foreign children's literature publishing to grow local children's literature in Taiwan quickly. However, while we focus on the excellence of foreign children's literature, we should never forget ourselves. Using foreign children's literature can enrich our children's lives, but it is about local culture in Taiwan that we want to educate our children through local children's literature after all. In the following discussion, there are two main directions that I have observed to be well developed in foreign children's literature that can help us to find our way out: various issues and multiculturalism.

## **I. Various Issues**

As mentioned in Chapter One, because of parents' anticipation for their children to enter a better school from junior high school to university and even graduate school, most children in Taiwan receive a great deal of pressure from their parents and the whole society. Textbooks occupy most of children's time for reading, so, conversely, they have less time to enjoy children's literature. Besides, parents in Taiwan tend to give their children reading materials about "something meaningful," like filial piety and confidence, and authors of local children's literature in Taiwan seldom touches issues about the dark side of real life. It is a problem in the children's publishing market in Taiwan that it repeats the same issues too often and excludes other important ones that we regard as taboo.

Therefore, limited time plus limited issues make children in Taiwan not able to appreciate all the aspects of children's literature. Children's world of reading is full of love and peace in Taiwan. However, they lose the chance to know the true face of the world before they encounter these problems someday in real life.

### **A. Issues That Have Been Revealed in Foreign Children's Literature**

What becomes a problem in foreign society might exist in Taiwan, and what is written in foreign children's literature may happen to children in Taiwan, too. Even if the situation may be different, the core of the problem must be similar everywhere in the world. The development of various issues in foreign children's literature has reached a high level, but it is

still poor in local children's literature in Taiwan. Issues that have been revealed in foreign children's literature but not in local children's literature in Taiwan are what we have to focus on to improve ourselves.

Take the genres of children's fiction for example. From realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy, to science fiction, these four main genres of fiction are all well developed in foreign children's literature. Each genre now has numbers of major works in the foreign children's publishing market. Conversely, local children's fiction in Taiwan tends to concentrate on realistic and historical stories. In Taiwan, there are certainly numbers of great fantasies inherited from old China, like Journey to the West (西遊記). However, most of these stories are created for all readers, not specifically for children. Even in the field of realistic fiction, local children's literature in Taiwan used to describe something happy or common problems in the society, like the pressure of studying. All special issues of children's lives definitely exist in Taiwan, but these issues are mostly discussed in books for adults. Discussing these problems, like the single-parent family, in books for adults but not for children is not enough because children are also the ones who face these struggles. These explosive issues developed in foreign children's literature really open up children's minds. Homosexuality, violence, drugs, young murderers in jail--these topics seem like taboos in a peaceful society, but we all know they do happen in every corner of the world.

Authors of foreign children's literature create stories to show all issues bravely. Even

though there are voices of opposition that condemn some children's books, they are excellent tools to educate children and show them the true face of the world if we use these works wisely and correctly. For example, many people argue about the issue of killing the baby in Lois Lowry's The Giver and insist that this book is improper for children, but it is because Jonas, the protagonist, tries to find his and the baby's way out is more important than the action of killing the baby that we need to pay attention to this book.

Another example is the issue of homosexual parents. This issue thrives over the world, and American authors reveal it in their books. For example, Leslea Newman and Diane Souza's Heather has Two Mommies and Michael Willhoite's Daddy's Roommate are released to children's market to lead this issue. No matter whether these books are mature enough or not, these authors do step out to discuss the real phenomenon in the world. Such issues in local children's literature in Taiwan are still silent, but we can't pretend they do not exist. We must challenge every issue to complete local children's literature in Taiwan, no matter whether they are good or bad, or will happen or not.

Various issues make foreign children's literature full of power, and this is what we need to improve to complete local children's literature in Taiwan. While we start to learn from foreign children's literature to enrich issues for local children's literature in Taiwan, we also need to educate ourselves, adults, first. Adults decide on most reading materials for children. If adults only want to give children something sweet and peaceful, they will refuse to buy

books that relate to dark issues so that children certainly will lose the chance to read them.

Dark issues do not equal improper ones. They are also excellent topics for children to learn about the world from different angles. It is when adults in Taiwan can accept various issues in local children's literature that children in Taiwan can have the chance to enjoy it completely.

### **B. Unique Issues That Local Children's Literature in Taiwan Can Explore**

It is our task to learn from the various issues of foreign children's literature and push local children's literature in Taiwan forward. On the other hand, we must look back to dig out the treasure we already own but still hide underground. Modern issues in children's literature provide children in Taiwan the chance to catch up with the change of time. However, original issues rooted in the culture of Taiwan can help children remember who they are and appreciate the wisdom of their ancestors.

There are lots of unique topics about Taiwan that can be explored to enrich local children's literature. For instance, we can collect folktales in Taiwan and show local arts in children's books. Children's literature is rooted in folktales that represent the cultural features. Therefore, preserving them for children is what we have to focus on (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Folktales are the Roots" 14). When talking about Japanese folktales, there are many famous stories that most people are familiar with, like Matsui's "Momotaro (The Peach Boy)." Taiwan also has famous folktales, and one of these famous folktales in Taiwan is "Tiger Auntie (虎姑婆)." Many people may not know the story of "Tiger Auntie," but it is the same

story that Ed Young illustrates in Lon Po Po. This folktale is regarded as the Chinese Little Red Riding Hood. In the original Taiwanese folktale, the evil role that the wolf plays in the story in Little Red Riding Hood is a tiger. Ed Young made this folktale famous by publishing this picture book, and this is what we can follow to promote folktales in Taiwan.

Local arts are another unique issue we can stress for local children's literature in Taiwan. With the help of the Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan, a series of picture books created for children in Taiwan was published in 2001. Many excellent local artists of every generation in Taiwan were invited to join this series. They created these picture books with their different professional specialties of art, like water color, color pencil, clay, etc., It is the Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan's goal to introduce local arts through picture books to children in Taiwan, especially children aged three to twelve, who are interested in picture books most (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Respecting Profession" 19). This series of picture books is the beginning that the government of Taiwan makes in its determination to preserve local arts for its offspring, and it is also the example that we can follow to create more excellent children's literature containing unique local issues for children in Taiwan.

## **II. Multiculturalism**

The United States is called the furnace of multiculturalism. The truth is that in the United States not every race has an equal chance to live their lives because of some difficulties from the society. From the government and associations, to people, it is everyone's

responsibility to help the minorities, like African American and immigrants from all over the world, to be confident in themselves.

Taiwan is in the same situation as the United States. As we know from Chapter One, Taiwan is composed of various tribes that can be mainly classified into four groups: people originally from the southern part of the Fukien Province of mainland China, Hakka people, provincial people, and indigenous peoples. Among them, the indigenous people are the group with the smallest population: There are about 1.2 million indigenous people in Taiwan, 5% of the whole population in Taiwan. Most of these indigenous people live in the rural areas in Taiwan with poor economic and educational conditions. To help them step into the society is what the government of Taiwan has done for a long time, but it still requires more effort. Besides, the population of foreign brides' children in Taiwan is increasing quickly. These children of foreign brides with poor background also need to struggle for their education and lives as indigenous children in Taiwan.

What can we do for these children with the help of children's literature? In the following section I discuss the issue that people in Taiwan need to consider more while we learn from the experience of foreign children's literature.

### **C. Children's Literature for Indigenous Children in Taiwan**

Like most other indigenous cultures in the world, indigenous cultures in Taiwan still preserve a natural life style. Indigenous people in Taiwan, who have beautiful dances and

voices, live with nature peacefully. Even now there are still lots of indigenous people in Taiwan who live their lives tightly connected with nature and follow the lessons inherited from their ancestors. It is their innocent spirits that keep them living happily in the mountains, but they lose the ability to compete with people living in cities. Therefore, many indigenous people move to areas near cities in order to have better jobs and education for their children. However, those who stay in the deep mountains still need to find their way to fight the unknown future.

Chen, Lingfen (張玲芬), the assistant professor of Child Development and Education Kindergarten Teacher Training Program (幼兒保育系) of the Ming Hsin University of Science and Technology (明新科技大學), takes the Atayal (泰雅) tribe as an example to point out the problems that indigenous children in Taiwan have to face. Indigenous children's knowledge mostly comes from their experience of daily life, which is much different from what is presented in popular textbooks in Taiwan that are common. Moreover, what they can learn from indigenous cultures also differs from what they can learn in the mainstream culture of Taiwan. Besides, the unequal distribution of educational resources makes the difference between cities and rural areas deeper (Chang 355-356). Under these worse life conditions, indigenous children in Taiwan usually suffer failure in study and frustration of self-confidence.

Certainly the government of Taiwan and associations can try to reduce the existing

difference between cities and rural areas to provide indigenous children in Taiwan a better chance to grow, and this point will be discussed more in the section on “creating a better environment for children's literature in Taiwan” later in this chapter. However, it is the indigenous people themselves that can make them strong from the root of education.

To improve this problem in Taiwan, foreign indigenous children's literature is the great demonstration for Taiwan to follow for excellence and to prevent the deficiency. Indigenous children's literature in the United States now has great achievements for American children, but children all over the world can also enjoy it. One of the most famous Native American heroes is the Powhatan woman known as “Pocahontas,” whose real name was “Matoaka.” Her story of saving a white soldier named John Smith is well known in the United States and was widely spread over the world by the animated movie Pocahontas, released by Disney in 1995. Even though there have been lots of arguments about this animated movie, undoubtedly Disney made people familiar with this Native American heroine and makes them care about the Native American culture more. No matter whether the film is honest to the real legend or not, for foreigners outside the United States. Pocahontas is a brave, smart girl who represents the whole Native American people.

While the success of Pocahontas is a wonderful model for encouraging Taiwan to spread indigenous cultures for children, arguments about this animated movie are what we must prevent. When we create children's literature and films for our children, following the

history faithfully is very important so that children learn the right background. It is a strong power to publicize indigenous cultures by associations, like Disney, with their huge approaches. However, the basic problem is this: Who can record these cultures truly on the basis of their experience? Indigenous authors are the one who can take that responsibility first.

With the indigenous blood inside their bodies, indigenous authors certainly can create indigenous children's literature more faithfully than any other authors who are not indigenous. Having indigenous authors to write down who they are for indigenous children in Taiwan is what we need to stress.

Now, there are some indigenous authors in Taiwan who try to preserve their cultures and spirits and educate their children by creating indigenous children's literature for them. Sakinu (亞榮隆 撒可努), a member of the indigenous people of the Paiwan (排灣), was born and grew up in Taitung (台東), Taiwan. He is an author whose books are based on the indigenous culture around him. Sakinu's first book The Sage Hunter (山豬, 飛鼠, 撒可努), published in 1998, now has an English edition. This book was also recommended by the Ministry Education of Taiwan (教育部) as excellent reading material for junior high school students (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Indigenous Children's Literature" 13). In 2005, The Sage Hunter was adapted as a movie and won the 14th Tokyo Global Environmental Film Festival – the Earth Vision Award in 2006.

Sakinu never received any training in writing. The way he creates is following his natural feelings and writing in simple language with illustrations. He not only writes down the old wisdom of indigenous cultures for children in Taiwan, but also encourages young indigenous authors to preserve their traditions in children's literature for their children because they are the one who know themselves best. Besides, Sakinu also encourages indigenous children in Taiwan to read children's literature based on other cultures. He believes it is when indigenous children in Taiwan open up their eyes and minds to greet the outside world that they will know how precious their own cultures are. With his enthusiasm and devotion to creating indigenous children's literature, the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission, R.O.C. (中華民國僑務委員會) invited Sakinu to join “The Week of Indigenous Taiwanese (台灣原住民週)” in San Diego in May 2005 to give a speech. This is important for indigenous people in Taiwan because they can speak out with their voices in an international activity. Sakinu's efforts not only preserve indigenous cultures in Taiwan for its children, but also introduce them to the whole world.

There are more and more people paying attention to indigenous children's literature in Taiwan in recent years. These children's books, no matter whether fiction or picture books, are mainly written in Chinese, and that is what we need to improve in indigenous children's literature. There are nine tribes of indigenous people in Taiwan, and now they all use Chinese to write because these indigenous languages do not have any written form: There are only

sounds but no words for their mother languages. Most indigenous people in Taiwan still can speak their mother languages, but now their children also need to learn Chinese to catch up to the children in cities. Without the help of writing, it is highly possible that someday indigenous children will lose the ability to speak their mother languages and will use Chinese instead (Chang 357). This problem, that one language only has sounds but no words, also exists in Taiwanese, the mainly used vernacular language in Taiwan, and Taiwan has done lots of work to spread Taiwanese in every aspect successfully, not only teaching children Taiwanese from their basic education, but also using all forms of children's literature, like rhymes, to make Taiwanese rooted in children's daily lives. Indigenous languages in Taiwan, not as popular as Taiwanese, require more effort to preserve.

Besides school education and parents' teachings in families to keep indigenous children familiar with their mother languages, now indigenous authors also try to use indigenous children's literature to solve this problem. Smkut Hgwinuk Qu Yaya (母親,她束腰), published in 2001, is a picture book that uses both Chinese and the language of Atayal in it to tell the story. Smkut Hgwinuk Qu Yaya is written in Chinese by Omi Wilang (歐蜜偉浪), illustrated by Ami Silan (阿邁熙嵐) and Meimei Masow (璿璿瑪邵), and translated by Masa Tohui (黃榮泉). Since there are only sounds but no writing for the language of Atayal, Masa Tohui uses English letters to spell words. This story comes from the real experience of Omi Wilang's childhood, describing how Omi Wilang's mother usually gave all the food she had to

her children and tied her waist with an old headscarf to ease her hunger. Omi Wilang let readers know how difficult their life was and the love of a great mother in this picture book. In Smkut Hgwinuk Qu Yaya, children can read in Chinese, while the children of Atayal can also read their language to contrast it with Chinese. Indigenous writers and illustrators in Taiwan hope their children will not give up their mother languages and will let children's literature help them in an invisible and easy way everyday when children read.

Even though developing indigenous children's literature in Taiwan has a hard and long way to go, it has already started to move with the help of advocates who care about the future of indigenous cultures: not only indigenous authors but also all the people in Taiwan.

However, there is another group of children in Taiwan facing a worse situation than that of indigenous children: children of foreign brides in Taiwan. While we learn from foreign indigenous children's literature to help indigenous children in Taiwan, can we use the same idea to help these children of foreign brides in Taiwan? This is another issue I will discuss in the following section.

#### **D. Children's Literature for Children of Foreign Brides in Taiwan**

How to help and educate the children of foreign brides in Taiwan is now the hot issue. The source of their problems is what we need to understand before we can give some suggestions for helping these children with the assistance of children's literature.

In 1994, the government of Taiwan pushed the policy of introducing foreign workers to

Taiwan, and this policy also started the phenomenon of more and more men in Taiwan beginning to marry brides from Southeast Asia. Among these Taiwanese-foreign couples, most of the brides are Vietnamese: over 60% in 2002, and those from Indonesia are the second largest number. "Foreign bride" is the general name these women from Southeast Asia have in Taiwan. 2002 was the year that the first group of these children of foreign brides attended elementary schools in Taiwan. According to the report in 2006 from the Children's Bureau Ministry of the Interior R.O.C., the percentage of the new babies born to foreign brides was 5.12%, grew fast to 12.46% in 2002, and stayed around 12% to 13% before 2006. This means that now one out of eight newborn babies in Taiwan is a child of two cultures: Taiwanese and Southeast Asian.

Why is the problem that the percentage of children of foreign brides increases quickly so serious? Actually, most foreign brides coming from Southeast Asia are kindhearted and honest, and they do help their new families in Taiwan a lot. However, the problem of these marriages is that men in Taiwan who have to marry wives from Southeast Asia are mostly of lower economic status, older, or defective. These men in Taiwan need help to find their wives from Southeast Asia, and these girls who would choose to marry men in Taiwan also mostly come from families of a lower economic condition. These couples' lower social and economic status forces them to live a life of poverty in Taiwan. Besides, most of these couples have to face the problem of these foreign brides' poor language abilities in educating their children,

and the possibility of segregation comes from the worry of the whole society that they might change the bloodline of the “real Taiwanese.” To improve life standards of these families of Taiwanese-foreign marriage is the main task for the government of Taiwan in providing them an equal chance in society.

Lower living standards cause these parents to have little money for their children, and it limits children's ability to explore their little world, especially in enjoying children’s literature. Before these children of foreign brides can live in the same economic conditions as other children in Taiwan, associations and schools must take responsibility for taking care of them. Leading them to use libraries sufficiently and holding free activities for them are methods we can try.

The other problem is the language barrier not only brings communication difficulties to foreign brides, but also causes the problem of language development to their children.

According to the statistics gathered by the Ministry of Education of Taiwan, children of foreign brides have the same learning achievements as other children in Taiwan in all subjects except language. If these foreign brides can communicate in Chinese fluently, only 4.4% of their children will have language-development delays. Otherwise, the percentage of these children's language-development delay reaches 24.1% if their mothers have poorer language abilities. Poor language ability causes difficulty in learning, which very possibly makes children of foreign brides delayed in development. Then, this development delay may lead

children of foreign brides to be segregated in school and bring frustration of self-identity.

Here, we can do something with children's literature to rebuild their world, since children's literature is the material that is close to their minds.

To solve the problem of language, we not only need to educate these foreign brides, but we also have to provide reading materials that fit the real needs of these children. We can't only give children of foreign brides the same lessons as other children in Taiwan use but need to design more special lessons for them to stress after their usual classes in school. The task to build up their confidence and self-identity is more challenging since the lack of confidence and self-identity is the result of all the pressures of their daily lives. However, we can try with children's literature to improve this problem. Here, foreign children's literature can give Taiwan a rich experience to follow to create our own way.

The children of foreign brides in Taiwan are similar to African Americans in the United States to certain degree: They are both people suffering from segregation. Even though they both have the same intelligence and abilities as other children, their different appearances and worse economic conditions bring them unequal treatment in the whole society. The United States faced this challenge before, and now they have a great solution: African Americans show their confidence and win respect from others. In the field of children's literature in the United States, many African American authors address their situations, struggles, and hopes for the world in their works.

Mildred D. Taylor, who won the Newbery Medal in 1977 for Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, is one of the African American authors in the United States. who is devoted to children's literature. In her real-life experiences, her father didn't want his children to live in a racist and segregated society, so they moved from the south to the north in the United States. Mildred D. Taylor had the experience of being the only black child in her class; therefore, she knows the feeling of being different and writes down her true vision of racial struggles. Mildred D. Taylor is a representative of those authors who write down their pride in books not only for themselves but also for those who are in the same situation as them. Mildred D. Taylor writes down the feeling of being different in the group, and this feeling will also come to children of foreign brides in Taiwan someday.

On the other hand, if these children of foreign brides in Taiwan can adapt to the environment well without feeling uncomfortable, another lesson for them to know is the other part of culture where they are from. Laurence Yep's Child of the Owl is an excellent example to follow here. Casey, the protagonist in Child of the Owl, is a Chinese girl in America who has to face her original culture after she has adapted to American life for a long time. It is a journey for Casey to find her Chinese name, her family charm, and her original home. Laurence Yep reveals the issue that people need to look back to their origins, and that is what children of foreign brides in Taiwan also need to do to trace their origins in the future.

Taiwan now needs authors like those in the United States to write for these children of foreign brides, but the difficulty is that now there is no author who is the child of a foreign bride who can write down who they are. These children of foreign brides are now too young to write for themselves: The oldest group are now elementary students.

Unlike African American authors and indigenous authors in Taiwan who can write for their children, it will take a few years to wait for the children of foreign brides to grow up to write for those children like them. Even though authors coming from the same background can write relevantly for their people faithfully, we other people still can try to create for children of foreign brides in Taiwan. What we can do with children's literature for these children of foreign brides to build up their confidence is try our best to educate them that they are certainly children we love as we do the others in Taiwan. We need to create specific children's literature for them first, to accompany their growth before they are mature enough to write for themselves.

These children of foreign brides in Taiwan have a hard way to go. They need to receive local culture in Taiwan from their fathers, the culture of their mothers' side, and the new culture of their own. We have to educate them with local culture in Taiwan to tell them they are undoubtedly sons and daughters of Taiwan, providing them with the original culture from their mothers' side because they should not forget where part of them is from, and perfecting the new culture they are creating, since it will definitely affect the future of Taiwan. In the

local children's publishing market in Taiwan, however, there is almost no professional children's literature for these children now. This is what we need to work on harder from now on before more problems grow.

Above are different aspects in which we can get assistance from the experiences of foreign children's literature. With proper adoptions, Taiwan can create unique styles and keep local children's literature in the mainstream with the help of foreign children's literature to enrich the children's publishing market in Taiwan.

### **Creating the Better Environment for Children's Literature in Taiwan**

Foreign children's literature in Taiwan certainly provides lots of experiences and ideas for local children's literature in Taiwan; it has been the main direction for us to enlarge foreign children's literature market on the island on which we live. In Chapter Three I discussed the issue of improving children's English ability to promote the original edition of foreign children's literature. When we concentrate on improving children's English, however, we need to think conversely more often: Do we stress developing foreign languages more than Chinese? It is undoubtedly important for us to stress improving children's English ability in this modern world, but this improvement can't be based on the children's poor Chinese ability. Language is the spirit of culture. The reading ability of children in Taiwan must be based on strong Chinese ability when we add other assistance, like English, to it (Chen, Jia-Shu, "The Hsin Yi Foundation" 12).

We need to seek the balance point between developing foreign children's literature in Taiwan widely and growing local children's literature in Taiwan intensively. How to keep local children's literature in Taiwan in the mainstream when we receive large amounts of foreign children's literature is what we need to keep in mind, and all of these works need to be based on a better environment for children's literature in Taiwan.

### **I. Nourishing More Talent**

Taiwan certainly can import more foreign children's literature to fill the publishing market, but this is not the best method for varying children's literature in Taiwan. Local children's literature is the best material for educating children in Taiwan about the island they live on and the culture they own, and authors of local children's literature in Taiwan definitely play the most important role in creating this literature. The more authors of local children's literature we have, the more and better children's literature we can provide to the children's publishing market.

How to nourish these writers and illustrators is what we need to focus on now. On the basis of what we lack, we can try to nourish authors of local children's literature in three aspects: education, encouragement, and increasing the concrete incomes to support these authors.

First of all, education is the basic work to nourish more writers and illustrators of local children's literature in Taiwan. Even though there are many talented writers and illustrators

for children's literature starting their creating without being trained, others can be educated to be great professional authors of children's literature after complete training. Training not only makes authors' works perfect but also helps authors to create literature that is close to children's needs. For example, students who attend child psychology classes might understand children in more depth, and they can create the literature for them according to their development stages. Helping students who are interested in children's literature to develop professional skills is the beginning of nourishing the authors of children's literature in the future. Professional curriculums of children's literature in Japan can be the target for Taiwan to catch up to. Chuang, Ling-Ling (張玲玲), the chief editor of the Grimm Press, attended courses related to children's literature in Japan about fifteen years ago. From her observation, the development of Japanese children's literature is twenty years ahead of Taiwanese. Children's literature in Japan is regarded as a professional subject, and teachers who give lessons are famous writers, illustrators, and editors who can lead students professionally (Chen, Jia-Shu, "The Innocent Creation" 21). Japan lets professionals educate professional authors of children's literature, and it makes for great achievements in Japanese children's literature. We need to work harder to change most people's notions of children's literature in Taiwan: Children's books are not just simple words and pictures but are professional books that can educate our children invisibly. Therefore, we must start by

producing professional books to let readers believe us, and education is the first step we can take.

Since now there are few channels by which students who are fond of the field of children's literature can learn, educational institutions in Taiwan need to establish related department to open classes for them. The National Taitung University is the pioneer institution of children's literature in Taiwan that can give its experiences and lead other associations to join this field. The research spirit of the Graduate Institute of Children's Literature of National Taitung University tends to theory. However, we also need institutions that can lead students in more practical way, and this is what we lack in Taiwan now. Working in both theory and practice is the complete method for educating students who would like to devote themselves to local children's literature in Taiwan.

Another work we can do to strengthen authors' minds to keep on working for local children's literature is to encourage them not to give up. After we educate lots of authors of local children's literature in Taiwan, how to build up their confidences to strive in this field is the next issue we need to consider. One of the most useful ways to encourage writers and illustrators of children's literature in Taiwan is to establish awards for them. Awards not only build up winners' confidences, but also encourage authors to compete with each other positively and peacefully. To win the honor of an award, authors must improve themselves to achieve the goal. Lin, Liang (林良), who is in charge of the Mandarin Daily News (國語日報

社), says that the quality of most local children's literature in Taiwan is not good enough, and he also suggests that establishing awards is the best way to encourage authors to create more earnestly. On the other hand, Lin, Liang points out another reason local children's literature in Taiwan is not good enough: the limited market. A small market limits authors' wills to create because of the actual income difficulties (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Respecting Profession" 17).

Without enough royalties to support authors' lives, even if they win certain awards that honor them, they cannot keep their enthusiasm. Therefore, how to increase authors' incomes is the next question we need to care about after all we have done: Extending authors' professions to other fields and enlarging the market of children's literature are two methods we can try.

Authors of local children's literature in Taiwan not only can earn their living by selling their books, they certainly can also be professional teachers who give lesson and speeches to students. They can also try to contact other institutions related to children's literature, like libraries and bookstores, to reach readers. Authors can adjust themselves to adapt to the problem of the limited market in Taiwan.

As hard as we can promote local children's literature in Taiwan, however, the population of purchasers in this island is limited. We also need to introduce our children's literature to other countries and extend the market. Huang, Yong-Song (黃永松), the editor of the Echo Magazine, points out that authors of children's literature in Taiwan must improve themselves and make their works mature. With the high quality of their works, authors of

local children's literature in Taiwan can sell them internationally to open the market. Also, when authors can keep their works in high quality, then publishers have confidence and will help them. Now, many local publishers in Taiwan try to sell excellent local children's literature to other countries. For example, winners of the Hsin Yi Picture Book Award now have the chance to publish their books in foreign editions, such as English, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, French, etc., It is the Hsin Yi Foundation's hope not only to introduce local children's literature in Taiwan to the world, but also to encourage local authors to create honestly by providing them with more concrete income (Chen, Jia-Shu, "The Hsin Yi Foundation" 13).

Above are some aspects that we can stress to nourish more writers and authors of local children's literature in Taiwan, and help them to create more children's literature based on the land we live in for our offspring.

## **II. Reducing the Existing Differences between Cities and Rural Areas**

When devoting resources to nourishing writers and illustrators to create more local children's literature for children in Taiwan, we suppose every child in this island has an equal chance to enjoy. However, not every child in Taiwan can have these books easily because the existing differences between cities and rural areas are huge. Therefore, the most important action to provide every child an equal chance is "to reduce the existing differences between cities and rural areas by providing a wide range of support services to culturally

disadvantaged regions,” and this has been promoted by the Taiwan Ministry of Education since 1998 (Chang 356).

There are some different ideas for providing support services to rural areas. Lin, Liang, who is in charge of the Mandarin Daily News, suggested that establishing children's libraries in rural areas is a useful way to solve the problem of unequal distribution of children's literature in Taiwan. Therefore, the Mandarin Daily News cooperated with the King Car Education Foundation (金車兒童文教基金會) to send publications to deep in the mountains (送報到山巔). This activity is an important and concrete action that shows our concern for children in rural areas. Lin, Liang also points out that only sending books to rural areas is not enough. Guiding children in rural areas to read is more important, and professional librarians are what we need to promote children's literature in rural areas.

As the person in charge of the Hsin Ti Foundation, which opened the first children's library in Taiwan, Chuang, Xin-Ru (張信如) doesn't support the idea of establishing lots of children's libraries in rural areas because it would cost a huge amount. Chuang, Xin-Ru suggests that we use kindergartens and elementary libraries in rural areas well to reduce the spending (Chen, Jia-Shu, “The Hsin Yi Foundation” 12). Even Chuang, Xin-Ru has a different opinion from that of Lin, Liang, who also emphasizes the importance of professional people to guide children in rural areas. She suggests that teachers in kindergartens and elementary schools take the responsibilities with the help of children's

parents.

Several ideas come from everywhere around Taiwan in order to give children in rural areas better environments for reading. No matter whether we establish new libraries for children or use kindergartens and elementary libraries, with these advocators' love and efforts, the reading environment for children in rural areas can and will be improved.

Besides providing children in rural areas a better reading environment, the government of Taiwan and some associations also frequently hold activities for these children to lead them to the joy of reading. For example, under the support of the Council of Indigenous Peoples (行政院原住民族委員會) and the Council for Cultural Affairs (行政院文化建設委員會), the first indigenous children's literature workshop was held in January 2000. It is our hope to lead children in rural areas of Taiwan to appreciate children's literature from the beginning of the millennium until forever. Once the existing difference between cities and rural areas is reduced, children living in rural areas of Taiwan can have an equal chance to enjoy children's literature and enrich their childhoods.

### **III. Providing Reading Opportunities for Children of Low-Income Families in Cities**

Generally speaking, families of higher educational and economic levels have more money for their children. Conversely, low-income families may have no extra money to satisfy their children's needs for reading. We need to realize clearly that developing children's literature in Taiwan is not only for making money. Most important of all are the children we

want to educate through the work of excellent children's literature. Therefore, providing more resources to children of low-income families in Taiwan is something we need to put more effort into.

Reducing the existing difference between cities and rural areas to provide children in rural areas an equal chance to read is a hard way to go, but these children are still easy for us to find them. It is more difficult to focus on children coming from low-income families spreading over the cities because there are almost no specific areas in cities where these low-income families gather.

To solve this problem, we need help from social associations, like the Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (台灣家扶基金會), and social workers. Then, we need to educate parents about the importance of children's reading and provide them available channels through which children can enjoy literature free or at low cost, like libraries and government publications. For example, the Council for Cultural Affairs of Taiwan not only establishes a Children's Culture website (兒童文化館), but also provides excellent children's books for more than 400 public libraries in Taiwan every year. Moreover, there are over 200 community groups with a "story mama" and volunteers who lead children to reading without any charge (Chen, Jia-Shu, "Children's Literature" 4-5). We hope every child can have the chance to enjoy the fun of reading despite the pressures of low income. While enlarging the business of the children's publishing market in Taiwan, it is our responsibility to take care of these

children in need.

#### **IV. More and Better**

While the development of local children's literature in Taiwan is just beginning, how to increase titles quickly is the main goal we have to achieve. Now, children's literature is on the way in Taiwan, and we must also try to improve the quality of children's books. To reach the goal of publishing children's literature of high quality, publishers have to prepare a large budget for it. Not every publisher has the will or budget; however, it is the government's task to encourage publishers with subvention. A successful example in which the government helps publishers to improve the quality of children's literature is available in Holland. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs in Holland encouraged the publishing of children's picture books of high artistic quality with subvention in the late 1980s because it was a risk for publishers to promote high-quality and expensive picture books at that time. With the subvention from the government, some publications of higher quality won the Holland's Golden Pencil Award or the First Graphics Prize during the Bologna Fair (Roback 29). It is the subvention from the government that makes publishers more confident in promoting high-quality children's literature in Holland. This is an excellent example for Taiwan to follow.

Now there are some available subventions from the government of Taiwan, and publishers who have the ideal of promoting local children's literature of high quality can seek help. Besides, we should try to combine subvention and awards to encourage high quality in

children's publishing. Large budgets give chances for excellent children's literature to survive, while awards provide honor that keeps authors enthusiastic.

## **V. Connecting Internationally and Sharing our Experience**

Just as we imported foreign children's literature to Taiwan all these years, we certainly can export our excellent local children's literature to the whole world. Exporting local children's literature in Taiwan not only extends our children's publishing market and increases the income for authors, but it is even more important for Taiwan in introducing our pride to other countries. As mentioned in Chapter Two, there are some local publishers in Taiwan trying to sell local children's literature overseas. Besides translating local children's literature in Taiwan into foreign editions, local publishers in Taiwan also try to sell original Chinese editions to other Chinese markets, like mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore. On the basis of the same culture, Taiwan not only does business with other Chinese markets, but also hopes to share its experiences with them. While we are concentrating on improving the children's literature environment in Taiwan, this is the next step we need to encourage.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Taiwan is an island with a deep and ancient cultural history. We have many unique subjects that can be developed into excellent children's literature, but some limitations and difficulties make the development of local children's literature in Taiwan slow. As foreign children's literature runs ahead of us, we must learn from it and catch up.

### **Keeping What We Had and Exploring What We Lack**

The children's publishing market in the United States is now thriving with local writers and illustrators. They don't need to export their children's literature to other markets to survive or import other foreign children's literature to enrich the United States market: The children's publishing market in the United States is now a kingdom that can be content in itself. However, the United States still keeps on exporting and importing children's literature every year (Roback 30). Trading children's literature internationally is not only a business for the United States, but also a medium for the United States to communicate with other cultures. The United States shares its experience with others and keeps learning from them. This is what we need to learn from the United States: to keep what we already have and explore what we lack as a way of developing a visible and viable children's literature presence in Taiwan.

On the other hand, while we are devoted to local children's literature in Taiwan, we should remind ourselves not to limit children's literature to books only. Newspapers, magazines, the Internet, etc., are all available forms that represent children's literature.

Moreover, developing local children's literature in Taiwan beyond the form of words is another field we can explore. Radio stations, TV programs, theatre, etc., are some other forms we already had before and can try to develop in more depth. Any children's literature could have different forms to present, and each of them would bring new style to fresh children's minds. For example, Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland has been presented in the forms of fiction, pop-up book, cartoon, musical, movie, etc., and each one gives new life to the story. Children's literature that reaches the international level certainly has the strength to be presented in various styles, like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, and it is our goal to bring local children's literature in Taiwan up to this level.

### **Sharing Our Experience with Other Chinese Worlds**

Selling local children's literature in Taiwan to other Chinese markets not only shares our experience with them, but also opens new markets for us. Compared with that in Western countries, the development of children's literature in Taiwan is in the beginning stage, and we need to strive harder. However, the development of children's literature in Taiwan is much ahead of that in most other Asian areas. It is our responsibility to share our experience of developing children's literature in Taiwan with other Asian countries and lead them to establish their own children's literature.

Moreover, other Chinese children's literature publishing markets, such as mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore, are now striving in the same process of developing

children's literature that Taiwan once did, and we can help them avoid some mistakes Taiwan made. It is more convenient for local publishers in Taiwan to sell their books in other Chinese children's literature markets because of the same language, and it is also a useful way to solve the problem of the limited market in Taiwan.

Mainland China is certainly the biggest market that local publishers in Taiwan must aim at. By law, couples in mainland China can only have one or two children. Chinese children are treated as “little emperors” because parents want to give them everything. But children's books in mainland China are still lower in quality, so it is the local Taiwan publishers' chance to exploit this market.

There have been some local publishers in Taiwan trying to contact other Chinese markets in these years. The Eastern Publishing Co. has printed their titles in Taiwan and exported these books to other Chinese markets for several years. The Formosan Magazine Press also publishes their titles in simplified Chinese editions, and some of these titles are printed in mainland China. For local publishers in Taiwan, printing children's books in mainland China is more practical than exporting books to mainland China: They are not only businessmen anymore. They are helpers who have sufficient abilities to lead others to develop their publishing of children's literature.

Besides, we can expect some day in the future that there will be a professional association of Chinese children's literature that joins all Chinese areas together. Children in

all Chinese areas share in the same blood and the same cultural background. So uniting us would be the best way to provide all Chinese children with the best Chinese children's literature.

### **Introducing Local Children's Literature in Taiwan to the Whole World**

Introducing local children's literature in Taiwan to foreign countries is what we must do in the future. Taiwan definitely has the right and responsibility to introduce our pride to the whole world. As mentioned in Chapter Two, now there are more and more local publishers in Taiwan trying to promote local children's literature in Taiwan with translated editions, like in English and Japanese, to other countries. This is a nice beginning to stepping outside our world.

Besides, children's literature based on cross-cultural cooperation is the other main work on which we can focus. Just as the Grimm Press invites authors from all over the world to create children's literature, this is a demonstration for other local publishers in Taiwan to follow. Children's literature with cross-cultural and cross-national features not only can help Taiwan show our work to the world, but can also increase cosmopolitanism.

We appreciate the fact that foreign children's literature opens up our children's minds. Foreign children's literature in Taiwan now plays an important role in enriching the children's publishing market in Taiwan, and it is a great model for local children's literature in Taiwan to follow in creating our world of children's literature. With children themselves, parents,

teachers, authors, publishers, and government, everyone in Taiwan must make our best efforts to perfect local children's literature in Taiwan, not only for ourselves, but also for every one in the world who cares about it.

Local children's literature in Taiwan is our root that grows tightly in the earth, and foreign children's literature in Taiwan is the trunk that helps us grow high to the sky. Following the experience of foreign children's literature can make us strong, but we must never forget to keep our local spirit and culture for children. We can and must bloom beautifully and have rich fruits for children in Taiwan and spread the seeds of hope to share with others: developing their own children's literature with help from Taiwan.

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