

WORKING WITH ETHNIC  
ASIAN-CHINESE  
IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN  
ORDER TO PROMOTE  
LEARNING THROUGH  
PLAY IN EARLY  
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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# BACKGROUND OF MY THESIS

- ▶ “Learning through play” is an important component in NZ
- ▶ However, Ethnic Asian-Chinese (EAC) immigrant families often question the educational value of play for young children (Guo, 2006; Li, 2001a; Liao, 2007; Wu, 2003, 2009)
- ▶ Te Whāriki affirms both the valuing of play and the valuing of diverse cultural perspectives
- ▶ Further research and discussion of EAC immigrant parental perspectives on play in ECE will address this tension

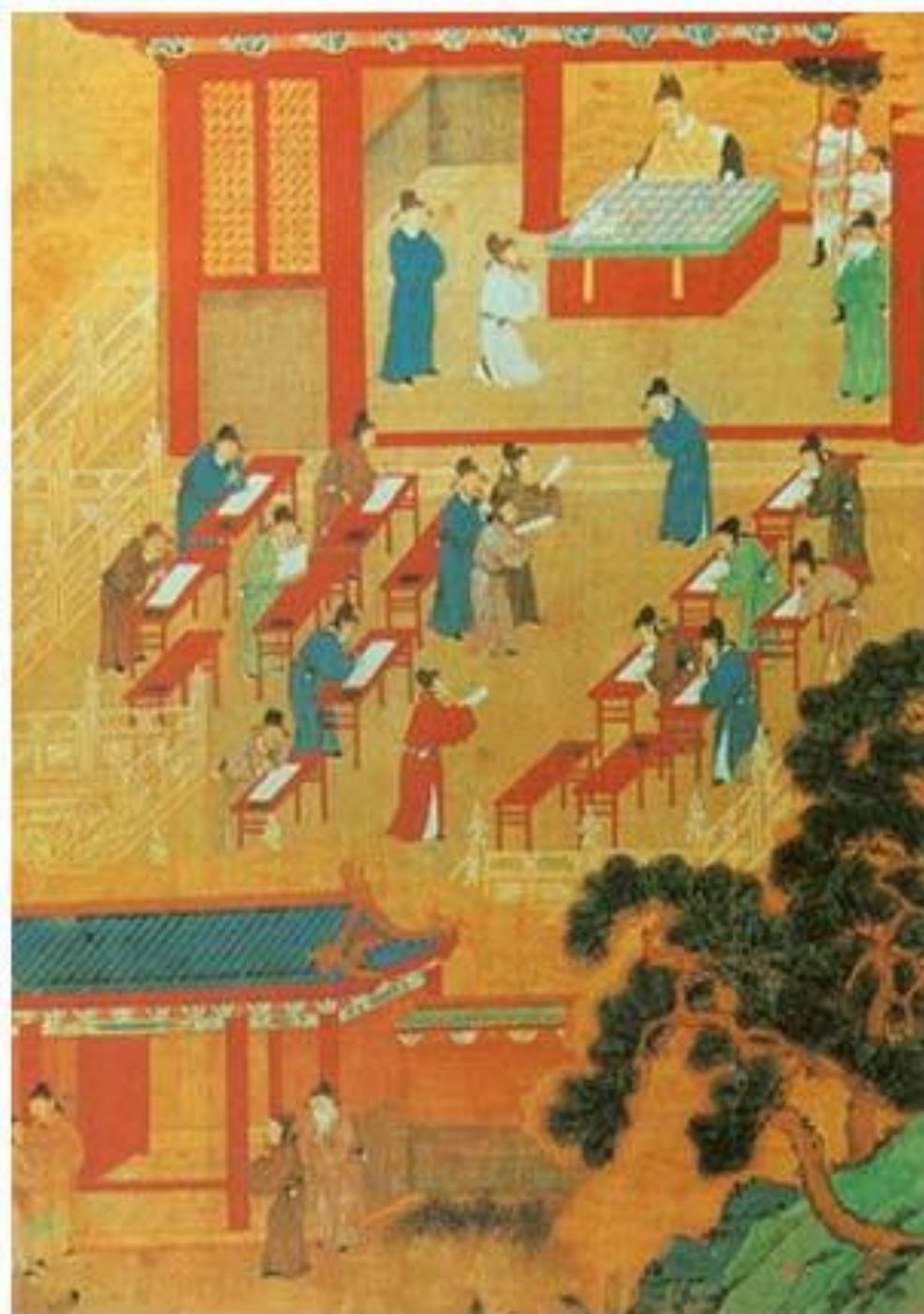
# ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

- ▶ Chapter 1:
  - ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Chapter 2:
  - ▶ Literature review of Western perspectives on play and learning
- ▶ Chapter 3:
  - ▶ Literature review of Chinese views on learning and play
- ▶ Chapter 4:
  - ▶ Research design and implementation
- ▶ Chapter 5:
  - ▶ Results and Discussion on EAC parents' perception of play and learning in ECE
- ▶ Chapter 6:
  - ▶ Results and Discussion of EAC parents' concerns about the play-based EC curriculum in NZ
- ▶ Chapter 7:
  - ▶ Results and discussion of EAC parents' expectations of early childhood teachers
- ▶ Chapter 8:
  - ▶ Implications and conclusion

# LITERATURE REVIEW: CHINESE VIEWS ON LEARNING & PLAY

- ▶ For Chinese, *learning* aims to achieve:
  - ▶ Breadth and depth of knowledge
  - ▶ Unity of knowing and morality
  - ▶ Apply the knowledge to the daily life and contribute to the society
- ▶ For many Chinese, learning has been a matter that should be distinct from play
- ▶ Although Confucius promoted that learning should be a joyful activity, Chinese rarely conceptualise learning as a fun activity

(Li 2001b; Liao, 2007)



## China's ancient official selection system

For 1300 years, from the Sui dynasty to the latter years of the Qing, the imperial examination system determined who could enter the imperial bureaucracy and become an official - the first step towards influence and power. Candidates were tested for their proficiency in fields such as music, arithmetic, literary composition, and command of the rites (both public and private rituals). Archery and horsemanship were also tested, and later curricula also included the "Five Studies": military strategy, civil law, revenue and taxation, agriculture and geography, and the Confucian classics.

# METHODOLOGY

- ▶ Qualitative approach

- ▶ 8 participants' stories about attending EC setting in NZ and their aspirations about play and learning for their children were heard, recorded, translated and interpreted
- ▶ *Phenomenological approach* allows me to centre the study on the lived experience of the EAC parents while at the same time to explore their views on play and learning
- ▶ *Snowball sampling*

<b>Name (Alias)</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Mother tongue</b>	<b>Years in NZ</b>	<b>EC centres attended</b>	<b>City of residence</b>
<b>Ai (S1)</b>	<b>mid 40s</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Taiwanese /Mandarin</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Public kindergarten</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Ping (S2)</b>	<b>early 40s</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Taiwanese /Mandarin</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Public kindergarten/Home-based care</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Ching (S3)</b>	<b>mid 30s</b>	<b>Brunei</b>	<b>Mandarin</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Play group/Montessori</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Tai (S4)</b>	<b>mid 30s</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Taiwanese /Mandarin</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Private full-day centre</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Mei (S5)</b>	<b>mid 30s</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>Cantonese</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Public kindergarten/Montessori</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Fei (S6)</b>	<b>mid 40s</b>	<b>Mainland China</b>	<b>Mandarin</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Private full-day centre</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Huei (S7)</b>	<b>early 40s</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Taiwanese /Mandarin</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Public kindergarten / Private full-day centre</b>	<b>Hamilton</b>
<b>Yu (S8)</b>	<b>mid 30s</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>Cantonese</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>Private full-day centre/Montessori</b>	<b>Auckland</b>

# Results and Discussion: EAC Parents' Expectations of Early Childhood Teachers

- ▶ The EC teachers should be more than a play facilitator
- ▶ EC teachers should have good subject knowledge
- ▶ EAC immigrant parents expect teachers to help their children's English development
- ▶ Communication between EC centre and EAC parents

# IMPLICATION

- ▶ EC teachers to make their role more visible to parents
- ▶ Effective communication in order to have a better idea of what children learn through play
- ▶ Teachers need to have good subject knowledge
- ▶ Teacher education providers are accountable in ensuring their graduates are competent in teaching all curriculum areas

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