Exploring Children’s Lived Experience of Resilience in Public Preschools in Taiwan: The Lens of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory

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Abstract

The importance of resilience in young children is paramount as it helps them adjust to their life difficulties. Whilst extensive empirical studies have focused on students and adults’ resilience, there has been relatively little attention to the development of children’s resilience during their early years. Although the concept of resilience and most of the protective and risk factors have primarily been investigated in Western literature, little is known about the understanding of resilience in non-Western cultures. Ungar (2008, 2012) has constantly emphasised the important influence of cultures and contexts on resilience research. There has also been a lack of knowledge surrounding the concept of developing resilience in theory and practice in Taiwan. This study sought to narrow these gaps in the knowledge of resilience.

This study focuses on the power of storytelling as an effective preschool pedagogy in order to facilitate the development of children’s resilience. The purpose of this narrative study is to explore preschoolers’ lived experience of resilience in the public preschools in Taiwan, through the engagement of teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories. In order to fully understand these lived experiences, this study uses Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory as a theoretical framework to analyse the potentially reflexive influence of social and contextual elements on individual preschoolers’ experiences of developing resilience.

This study was undertaken in a narrative approach as a methodology to capture preschoolers’ lived experiences in relation to resilience. There were five preschoolers selected from three public preschools in Taiwan. Two analytical frameworks were adopted to analyse the multiple methods of data collection that included classroom observations; children, teachers and parents’ interviews; children’s documents; and my own research field notes.

Firstly, to explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience, the analytical framework was developed from Riessman’s dialogical/performance narrative analysis (2008). Secondly, to explore influential elements and the children’s interactions with these on the development of their resilience in the five ecological systems,
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory provided a theoretically thematic framework.

The findings of this study were presented in accordance with these two analytical frameworks. In children’s narratives of resilience, there were four themes identified: 1. The process of children’s resonance with, and teachers’ storytelling in relation to, the resilience-orientated story as the premise of promoting children’s resilience. 2. A collaborative narrative as a resilience facilitator. 3. The complementary relationship between children’s resilience and emergent identities shaped by the daily interactions with some unique social and cultural elements in the Taiwanese context. 4. Multimodality of preschoolers’ narratives as a means of obtaining insight into children’s lived experiences of resilience.

The findings surrounding sources of resilience provided insights into the understandings of an emerging construct of resilience, and of influential elements and their interactions with individual children on their resilience in the Taiwanese social and cultural context. These influential elements and interactions encompass the values of extended families as an element of a cultural heritage, cram schools playing a unique educational culture, and multiple religious traditions as the Taiwanese way of practicing their folk beliefs and religions. This study also contributes to the resilience literature from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspective, and also demonstrates the limitation of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory in understanding the importance of cultural influences on an individual’s development of resilience.

Findings recommend and reinforce the effective use of storytelling pedagogy for professional practice in early childhood education for promoting the development of children’s resilience in the early years. The findings also provide evidence to education policy makers in Taiwan by minimizing the influence of uncertain education reform on children’s resilience, and by recognizing and prioritizing the importance of children’s resilience development in early childhood education.

**Keywords:** Preschool children, Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, resilience, narrative, Taiwan
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed: Kuan-Ling Lin

Date: April 26, 2017
Publications


Conference Presentations


List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEST</td>
<td>Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECECA</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education and Care Act (Taiwan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPCTA</td>
<td>Curriculum Outline for Preschool Care-Taking Activities (Taiwan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO1</td>
<td>Research Objective 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>RO2</td>
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Acknowledgement

My sincere appreciation goes to the contributions made by not only the five research children, but also those in the three public preschools in Taiwan who participated in this study. I thank all those who opened their hearts and shared their lived experiences with me during this research journey. I believe that the interweaving lived experiences between them and me are meaningful and valuable.

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With special thanks to Dane Lavery who kindly provided his critical review of this study and proofread this dissertation.

It is extremely fortunate for me to study with so many inspiring colleagues at Griffith University. Thank you for being the greatest company during this study. I am also thankful to the adverse time I have gone through as without experiencing adversities, I would never know what resilience is.

I am forever indebted to my heavenly grandmother, and beloved father and brother for providing me with the best resources, and letting me be who I am. Thank you to my newborn nephew for coming into the family and healing my bad times with his smiles. My deep gratitude also goes to the 25-year reunion with my biological mother which makes this journey more meaningful.

This work is dedicated to God for making it possible.
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Preface

“If we hope to live not just from moment to moment, but in true consciousness of our existence, then our most difficult achievement is to find meaning in our lives” (Bettelheim, 1991, p. 3).

Throughout this PhD journey, I have frequently reflected on what I have learnt from my personal experiences and the meanings of these experiences. Studying ‘experiences’ is a focus here as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue that “narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience” and this is "because narrative thinking is a key form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it” (p. 18). Therefore, this study uses the methodology of a narrative approach, and begins with my personal story as a self-narrative form for the following reasons: from my personal perspective, studying and teaching experiences allow me to profoundly explore my own identity and pursue meaning of my life journey; from the perspective of a narrative approach, writing self-narrative is to recognize and reflect the influence of my subjectivity on the interpretation of the participant preschoolers’ resilience stories.

Looking for meaning in our life is a continual journey. This narrative study began through the pursuit of the meaning of my early childhood experience in relation to my parents’ divorce. This was an important part of my journey in finding and constructing the meaning in my life and served as a stimulus for this study.

*Storytelling is a vivid and colourful memory from my early years.* My father’s storytelling embellished my fragmented early childhood. I have not forgotten how my father would tell a story by applying different voices and languages so as to play different protagonists, create an enchanting storytelling scenario and bring joy to the moment. My brother and I always asked my father to repeat the story, as all children do. Retrospectively, the story not only brought back a delightful memory of my father’s humorous storytelling, but also helped me develop a physically and emotionally intimate connection with him.
Life was turned upside down. Coping with the effects of my parents’ divorce has always been part of my life-long learning journey. That year, I was just six years old. Moving, transferring to another primary school, and adjusting to a new life were not easy for any of us. My father’s storytelling no longer took place. Life became very challenging at school and in the conservative community that existed in Taiwan in the 1980s.

Education is my lifeguard. Desperate to offset the shame of being a child from a single-parent family, I worked harder to achieve success at school. However, a voice in my heart always told me to be a storyteller; who can translate the same warm and joyful memories that I received from my father. With the assistance and encouragement of the many teachers and academics that I have come in contact with throughout my academic journey, I became a preschool teacher who loves storytelling and a researcher who endeavours to help preschoolers adapt to their life difficulties.
Chapter 1: Introduction

“The curriculum then becomes a child’s journey into story and the teacher lives with the child through that unfolding story” (Lewis, 2009, p. 17).

The use of self-narrative in research is not only to point out the different perspectives between one’s self and others (Kennedy-Lewis, 2012), but also to help my reflection on the influence of this study, as one of the important strategies to improve trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005). This chapter formulates the background of this study that shapes the research purpose and objectives. It outlines the significance of exploring children’s resilience in Taiwan, such as raising concern over the development of preschooler’s resilience, and narrowing the gap between the western and Taiwanese resilience literature. At the end of this chapter, the structure of this study is presented.

1.1 Background of the Study

This study originated from my personal experience, as outlined in the preface. It also recognizes the power of storytelling and the importance of resilience in child development. It identifies and aims to respond to literature gaps in resilience in both Western and non-Western cultures, and in understandings of the challenges of early childhood education in Taiwan. These components together fundamentally inform this study.

1.1.1 Storytelling as multiple tools

Storytelling is a useful tool to reflect on personal professional practice (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). The rationale for this study is underpinned by my experiences as a preschool teacher, a child of my parents’ divorce and its subsequent influence on my personal development, and how these have all shaped my teaching philosophy and beliefs. In line with Clandinin (1985), teachers’ origin and reconstruction of their past diverse experiences are often reflected in a specific circumstance in classroom practice.
that they encounter in the present or future. Storytelling is one of the ways that cumulative lived experiences can be expressed.

Storytelling is also an effective teaching pedagogy that benefits both teaching and children’s learning (Collins & Cooper, 1997). During my working experience in preschools, I had a realization that teacher’s storytelling provides insights into preschoolers’ fascinating inner worlds. This study seeks to listen to Taiwanese preschool children’s narratives through their own voices. According to Lewis (2009), “ours is a story shaped world, being human is to live in narrative; story is one of our fundamental ways of making meaning; narrative imagining has both epistemological and ontological import in all that we do and become” (p. 17). Simply put, it is important to learn from our personal experiences through storytelling.

Through listening to preschoolers’ narratives and learning their lived experiences, I noted an intriguing phenomenon that raised several questions for me: Why do some children endure parental separations or conflict, disabilities, or family grief, and still do well; whereas others do not? What makes each child so different? How can I assist young children in coping with the negative impacts of what they experience? These are the questions I am seeking the answers to in this study.

**1.1.2 Resilience and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory**

Resilience explains an individual’s “positive adaptation that has been manifested in the face of negative experiences” (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006, p. 22). Children’s resilience likely determines the outcome of their development and explicates observed differences. A number of empirical resilience studies indicate the significance of individual resilience for avoiding negative consequences, such as low academic achievement and dropping out of education (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006), mental health problems (Davydov, Stewart, Ritchie, & Chaudieu, 2010) and even suicide (Roy, Sarchiapone, & Carli, 2007). To prevent such negative results from occurring in human development, it is important to foster resilience in early childhood.

Resilience can be taught and cultivated in many ways (Deveson, 2003; Hammer, 2011; Meyer, 2008). In this study, teachers’ storytelling is presented as one of the
effective pedagogies for facilitating young children’s resilience for two reasons. First, stories and storybooks have ubiquitously been employed in preschool settings; the children live with stories and talk about their stories (Puroila & Estola, 2014; Puroila, Estola, & Syrjälä, 2012a). Second, there is empirical research to indicate that storytelling can promote young children’s resilience by promoting not only their language and literacy development (Aram, 2006; Daniel, 2012; Dawkins & Oneill, 2011; Neumann & Neumann, 2009), but also their social and emotional development (Crawford, Brown, & Crawford, 2004; Fredericks, 2003).

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (BEST) is adopted as a theoretical framework in this study. This is because individual children’s lived experiences are always influenced by their environments where they interact or connect. BEST is a foundation of understanding child development and formulates relationships and interactions between the child and their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This model of BEST is implemented in resilience research in order to conceptualize various influential factors from an individual level to ecological levels, pertaining to a microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter, & McWhirter, 2013; Ungar, Ghazinour, & Richter, 2013). For instance, an individual’s traits are significant factors leading to effective personal adaptation (Benard, 1993, 2007; Henderson, 2007; Werner, 2006; Werner & Smith, 1992). The personal characteristics, such as optimism, secure attachment and self-efficacy, play critical roles in the way people face risks and adversities (McWhirter et al., 2013; Richardson, 2002; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005). Common risk situations and environments for the development of resilience encompass dysfunctional family issues, low academic performance, child abuse or neglect, living in poverty, and/or mental problems (McWhirter et al., 2013). In contrast, there are numerous protective factors embedded in an individual’s surroundings to foster the development of a child’s resilience, such as family financial stability, connectedness to families, schools or communities, complete welfare systems, and healthy childcare services (Benard, 1993; Blum, McNeely, & Nonnemaker, 2002; Werner & Smith, 1992).
The literature in both Western countries and the Taiwanese context shows the gap in the body of knowledge of resilience. This is because Ungar (2008) pointed out that researchers in the Western world “do not yet know what resilience means to non-western populations and marginalized groups” (p. 219). He has constantly raised the importance of the influence of cultures and contexts on resilience research as they are integral in the understanding of resilience (Ungar, 2008, 2012). For instance, the study conducted by Gunnestad (2006) indicates that a cultural factor can be either a protective or risk factor in an individual’s development in the three non-Western groups, Latino youth, North American Indian First Nation, and African cultures. However, a scarcity of cross-cultural resilience studies leads to a lack of understanding of cultural factors. Hence, this study intends to fill to the gaps of resilience research from a perspective of Taiwanese cultural contexts.

1.1.3 Early childhood education in Taiwan

In Taiwan, young children aged 2-6 years can enrol in a preschool (Ministry of Education, 2013). Although preschool education is not compulsory, approximately 80% of children attend preschool and approximately a third of the children enrol in a public preschool (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Because this study is embedded in early childhood education in Taiwan, two contextual factors should be acknowledged: the limited research on resilience undertaken in Taiwanese contexts; and the ongoing emphasis on academic-orientated curriculum (e.g. Mathematics, Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, literacy and numeracy) across educational settings and sectors in Taiwan.

Lack of resilience research in Taiwanese contexts

In accordance with Ungar’s concern (2008), the concept of resilience in non-Western cultures remains unknown. This concern is not only consistent with Ungar, but also shows a lack of attention to the importance of resilience and disregard of children’s psychological well-being due to a paucity of studies in resilience in Taiwan as a non-Western country. According to the Early Childhood Education and Care Act (ECECA) in Taiwan (Ministry of Education, 2013), one of the main purposes of preschool
education is to ensure the development of children’s physical and mental health. However, there were limited research topics related to the well-being of Taiwanese children, or resilience in the early childhood education field in three major domestic academic databases\(^1\), and four international education databases\(^2\), which will be reviewed in detail in Chapter 2.

There are many more resources on how to improve children’s numeracy and literacy by applying certain curricula and pedagogies. This is because Taiwanese society remains highly and prioritizes academic achievement as a major learning outcome. The high demands on this type of learning leads to students becoming incredibly stressed (Yi, Wu, Chang, & Chang, 2009). However, there is evidence to show that physical health and mental well-being are a fundamental basis of learning (Hartley, 2013; Tang, Huang, & Lin, 2009; Tang, Lin, Liu, & Zheng, 2011). In the 21st century children suffering from mental health problems has become a devastating phenomenon, and is shown to negatively affect school performance (Obradović et al., 2009; Pan & Yi, 2011; Swanson, Valiente, Lemery-Chalfant, & O’Brien, 2011). For this reason educators should pay more attention to the development of children’s resilience, and put more emphases on the importance of children’s holistic well-being (Obradović et al., 2009; Pan & Yi, 2011; Swanson et al., 2011).

**Reflection on academic-orientated curricula**

Based on the ECECA, the Curriculum Outline for Preschool Care-Taking Activities (COPCTA) was developed to guide the six learning domains: physical movement, cognition, language, social interaction, emotion and aesthetic (Early Childhood Educare, 2012). However, the implementation of the preschool curriculum in Taiwan tends to emphasize academic and language learning, and to overlook the importance of children’s emotional development (Liao & Li, 2004). Liao and Li’s argument (2004) corresponds to the limited number of literature on preschoolers’ well-

\(^1\) Three domestic databases: Government Research Bulletin, PerioPath Index to Taiwan Periodical Literature System, and National Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan.

\(^2\) International education databases: ProQuest Education Journals, Psyinfo, ERIC, and EBSCO host.
being that can be found in the academic databases, as discussed in the previous section. The status of this overloaded academic-orientated curriculum also appears in this study.

As previously noted, children’s well-being is as important as their academic performance. When I had an opportunity to talk to some preschool teachers serving in public preschools in Taiwan regarding the concept of resilience, they showed their interest in integrating this concept into the curriculum. Although these teachers urged me to learn more about how to cultivate children’s resilience, there are some challenges.

The first challenge is the translation of the term ‘resilience’. Due to a scarcity of resilience studies conducted in Taiwan, the meaning of resilience used in the educational field has little common consensus in either Taiwanese or Chinese. This leads to a challenge in communicating with the preschool teachers about what resilience is. By translating a relevant paper from English to Chinese, I was able to successfully explain an understanding of protective and risk factors.

The most challenging part of the embodiment of the concept of resilience in their classrooms is that the current curricula are already overloaded for both children and teachers (Lin, 2016; Wu, 2014). A few teachers in this study have reflected that the academic-orientated curricula, such as mathematics, reading, writing, and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, occupy most of the time at preschool. These teachers pointed out that the pressure of teaching these curricula comes from the parents’ expectations. For these reasons, on the condition of not overloading the current curricula, preschool teachers used the original storytelling time to build role models of resilience instead of their primary purpose of teaching cогитатив-orientated curricula. I named the story the teachers used to develop preschoolers’ resilience as the resilience-orientated story.

As a consequence, while these enthusiastic teachers have consistently endeavored to improve the focus of their storytelling on resilience, they were also keen to gauge the efficacy of the development of children’s resilience through the storytelling. This desire on their part also facilitates the formulation of this study.

In summary, this doctoral research interweaves these threads: the inspiration of storytelling in preschool teaching; the importance of resilience in the early years; and
the challenges of early childhood education in Taiwan. The background of this study not only describes my personal experience, but also briefly identifies gaps in resilience research in both Western and Taiwanese contexts, which forms the purpose of this study in the next section.

1.2 Research Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this narrative study is to explore preschoolers’ lived experience of resilience through their narratives in public preschools in Taiwan through the engagement of teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories. As teachers’ storytelling is one of the useful pedagogies in teaching (Daniel, 2012), and of the age-appropriate interventions of promoting young children’s resilience (Berson & Baggerly, 2009), this study is expected to explore the manifestation of preschoolers’ resilience in their narratives. The purpose of this study shapes the two Research Objectives as below.

Research Objective 1 (RO1): Explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories and then engage in story discussions.

Research Objective 2 (RO2): Explore the content of children’s narratives to identify some influential elements and interactions between the children and their influential ecologies on the resilience development through the lens of BEST.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be considered from the following perspectives; advocating the importance of resilience in early age, providing feedback to reflect on teachers’ pedagogy and preschool curriculum designs, and contributing to the body of knowledge of resilience and BEST.
1.3.1 Advocacy for promoting resilience learning in Taiwanese preschools

Owing to a lack of attention to resilience, few resilience studies have been conducted in preschool children in Taiwan (Table 2.2). Granted, the concept of resilience might be new to Taiwanese educators; it does not mean however, that children do not need to learn how to be resilient. Today’s children are living in a world with far more potential risks than the children of the past (McWhirter et al., 2013). Young children bear a higher rate of family separation and the stresses of life, suffer from mental health problems, and are more easily influenced by numerous technological products and the media (McWhiter et al., 2013). In other words, they all face a number of risk factors early on in life. Fostering resilience is one of the most significant protective factors for educators to assist children in developing. This study advocates the importance of resilience development at an early age.

1.3.2 Providing feedback to preschool teachers to improve pedagogy and curriculum designs

Through exploring children’s narratives after the teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories, the findings of this study seek to provide feedback to the teachers on their understanding of the stories. The children’s responses and interactions with the stories, derived from their own narratives, can offer feedback to the implementation of teachers’ storytelling pedagogy and to the improvement of future preschool curriculum designs. The opportunity of learning from children’s narratives also enables the preschool teachers to reflect on their academic-orientated curricula and its role in child well-being development.

1.3.3 Bridging gaps in literature

From the viewpoint of resilience research, as this study is undertaken in Taiwan rather than a Western nation, some social and cultural elements influencing the development of children’s resilience are expected. Hence, the findings of the study contribute to the body of knowledge of resilience from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspectives.
Moreover, BEST was well established and has been broadly employed in Western countries in various research fields. It is valuable to learn about how the application of BEST as a theoretical framework in this study benefits in a non-Western social context and guides the analysis of RO2. In contrast, this study will also be able to provide understanding of limitations of BEST when applying it in the Taiwanese public preschool context.

1.4 Summary

The research background derives from the powerful storytelling in my teaching experience and the critical reflection and challenges in early childhood education in Taiwan. It is now established that the significance of this study is practical in professional practice, is introspective in preschool curriculum, is original in resilience research in Taiwan, and is intended to narrow the gap between the resilience literature of a non-Western country and the evidence-based literature of Western countries. This study is defined by the perceived importance of resilience as a protective mechanism in child development. The purpose of this research is to explore the lived experiences of preschool children who have developed their resilience through engaging in teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in Taiwanese public preschools. Additionally, by conducting this study, it seeks to promote resilience in early childhood in Taiwan, to support the use of storytelling as pedagogy in professional practices, and add new knowledge to the current literature from the perspective of Taiwanese cultural contexts.

1.5 Structure of the Study

Chapter 1 points out the key components that formulate this study; namely, storytelling as teachers’ pedagogy and the implementation of a narrative approach, the development of preschoolers’ resilience through the lens of BEST, and early childhood education in Taiwan as the embedment of the research context. These shape the purpose of this study and the two Research Objectives.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review in accordance with the three components: global and local resilience research; the conceptualization of BEST and resilience that is
adopted in this study; and the relationship between teachers’ storytelling and children’s narratives. Method for this study is detailed in Chapter 3 where an explanation to account for the application of the narrative approach as a methodology, the methods of data collection and data analysis, and the consideration of trustworthiness of this study are also outlined.

Chapter 4 outlines the findings in response to RO1, and reveals the five participant children’s narratives of resilience, such as:

- Howard’s confusion over understanding his parental separation.
- Kelvin’s useful coping strategy for his anger after losing a competition.
- Timothy’s engagement of teachers’ storytelling despite low learning motivation in math and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols lessons.
- Victor’s improvement of his interpersonal relationships with peers.
- Ian surmounting his fear of darkness.

Chapter 5 analyses these narratives within BEST in response to RO2. In order to identify influential elements, and interactions between the children and their ecologies on their resilience development, the structure of Chapter 5 follows this theoretical framework, including microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems.

Chapter 6 discusses the key findings of RO1 and RO2 in the context of the relevant literature. Furthermore, this chapter points out the limitations of BEST and conceptualizes an emerging resilience model in Taiwan in light of Chapter 4 and 5. Chapter 7 is the final chapter of this study, which summarizes the findings, outlines the strengths and limitations of this study, and presents recommendations for professional practitioners, policy makers, and future researchers.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview

Chapter 1 points out some significant components that frame the research background and that shape the purpose of this study. In this chapter, these components are explored and presented: the conceptualization of resilience; Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (BEST) as a theoretical framework and potential influential elements and interactions on resilience development; and storytelling and narrative.

First, in the review of resilience research, the literature on the concept of resilience and resilience studies in Taiwan, is outlined. After reviewing the definitions and debates of ‘resilience’ and ‘protective and risk factors’, it is found that resilience research is well developed in Western literature. To understand the literature gaps, resilience studies conducted in Taiwanese social and cultural contexts and written in Chinese/Mandarin and English are reviewed.

Resilience is the capacity for individuals to bounce back when they encounter life’s adversities (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Grotberg, 2003; Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2011; Lerner et al., 2012; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1992; Wu et al., 2013). Throughout their lives, people in different developmental stages deal with different risk factors (McWhirter et al., 2013). As a result, it is important for individuals to cultivate their resilience in order to cope effectively with diverse risks (Grotberg, 2003). Much of the current resilience research has been conducted in Western countries leaving gaps in the applicability of the resilience construct to non-Western contexts (Ungar, 2008). Also, there is inadequate consideration of social and cultural influences on the development of children’s resilience, and little attention paid to children in their early years (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten, Gewirtz, & Sapienza, 2013). This study attempts to narrow the gaps in resilience literature as applied to a non-Western context.

Secondly, the theoretical framework that forms this research is based on BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and is
integrated with potentially influential elements on children’s resilience. The exploration of these elements not only includes protective and risk factors from the perspectives of Western and Taiwanese literature, but is also embedded in the five ecological systems of BEST, namely, microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994). Furthermore, BEST affords the interactive framework as a proximal process to explore the interaction between the influential protective and risk elements on an individual and their environments (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Thirdly, the review focuses on the value and importance of storytelling and narrative, consisting of the definitions of storytelling in this study, and the characteristics of children’s narratives. The literature about teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy to promote children’s resilience supports the premise of this study. Inferred from the literature, through engaging in teachers’ storytelling and discussion, this study aims to explore children’s narratives as their expression of their lived experience in relation to resilience in distinct forms and multiple ways. It is established that teachers’ storytelling can facilitate the development of children’s resilience, which is the approach taken in this study. Through reviewing supportive literature, this chapter outlines how storytelling is not only one of the most useful pedagogies in teaching; it is also one of the most age-appropriate interventions for promoting young children’s resilience.

Children’s storytelling is frequently associated with their lived experiences as Clandinin and Connelly (1990) argue that people construct and reconstruct their lived experience by storytelling. Listening to preschoolers’ voices to understand how they reconstruct their experiences of resilience is the primary concern of this study. Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories, children manifest their understanding of resilience through diverse forms of narratives.

Hence, through reviewing these three areas of literature, this chapter provides background knowledge for this study, identifies clear gaps which in turn help to shape the rationale of this study. It also provides an outline of the theoretical framework based on BEST for exploring children’s lived experiences of resilience as the purpose of this study.
2.2 The Study of Resilience

This study is concerned with the development of children’s resilience. The first section of the literature review conceptualizes two terms and examines ongoing arguments about the notion of resilience. Resilience research is also reviewed both globally and locally. In terms of resilience studies from a Taiwanese social and cultural perspective, a lack of resilience research conducted in Taiwan and related cultural discussions are addressed.

2.2.1 Conceptualization of terms

There are two related terminologies outlined in this section. Firstly, various conceptions and debates of resilience are considered and evaluated. Secondly, the definitions of related constructs, protective and risk factors, drawn from Western resilience literature are briefly discussed.

Definition and debates of resilience

Although there is no universal definition of resilience, the commonly held understanding of resilience over the past decade is: a positive outcome of an individual’s capacity to successfully adapt in spite of encountering high risk circumstances (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Lerner et al., 2012; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006; Wu et al., 2013). In light of this general definition of resilience, two characteristics construct the concept of resilience: occurrence of influential threat exposure; and successful adaptation despite facing this threat (Lerner et al., 2012; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006).

The initial characteristic is exploring an individual’s threats or risk factors, which affect the individual’s resilience. These negative factors are outlined in Table 2.1 and discussed in the next section with protective and risk factors.

The second related characteristic of resilience, successful adaptation, remains a major challenge to resilience researchers (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Masten & Obradović, 2006; Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006; Schoon,
This is for two reasons. The initial challenge is that the evaluation of good or bad adaptation or adjustment for individual resilience, without considering one’s culture and/or context, is seen as problematic (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Masten & Obradović, 2006; Ungar, 2012, 2013). Ungar (2012, 2013) argues that different cultures and contexts provide unique resources to foster resilience. As relevant cross-cultural resilience research conducted by Ungar et al. (2007) shows, cultural adherence as one of the apparent themes to achieve one’s resilience has been relatively less prominent in the narratives of the research participants from a Western background. Consequently, Ungar et al. (2007) suggest that the criteria for evaluating resilience should be varied comprehensively by diverse cultures and contexts. In order to fit research to cultural contexts, the definition of resilience should also be redefined in diverse studies (e.g. Luthar et al., 2000; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Masten & Obradović, 2006; Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006; Schoon, 2006; Ungar, 2012, 2013).

The second challenge is the conventional evaluation of successful adaptation has overlooked marginalized groups (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013; Ungar, 2011; Young, Green, & Rogers, 2008). For example, Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) critique the same criteria of adaptation used in both non-disabled and disabled people, leading to the fact that people with disabilities are never deemed to exhibit resilience. In their study, they contend that this is a unitary judgement and can identify a schoolboy with a disability as being resilient (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013). This is because although the boy was not associated with outcomes of normative expectations, such as successful scholastic performance and interpersonal relationships with peers, his reaction toward being bullied was active and positive (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013). In the early stages of resilience research, Kaplan (1999, pp. 31-32) commented on this unitary evaluation of resilience:

A major limitation of the concept of resilience is that it is tied to the normative judgments relating to particular outcomes. If the outcomes were not desirable, then the ability to reach the outcomes in the face of putative risk factors would not be considered resilience. Yet it is possible that the socially defined desirable outcome may be subjectively defined as
undesirable, while the socially defined undesirable outcome may be subjectively defined as desirable. From the subjective point of view, the individual may be manifesting resilience, while from the social point of view the individual may be manifesting vulnerability.

Furthermore, children in early childhood are regarded as a marginalized group because their voices are rarely heard, and they are seldom the focus of resilience research (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006). As Kaplan noted (1999), this study believes that normative outcomes to assess schoolchildren should not be adopted for preschool children. In the early years, age-appropriate measures of adaptation should meet general developmental tasks, such as language acquisition, attachment with important caregivers, fundamental development of child movement, appropriate emotional expressions, and learning social skills (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013). In other words, young children’s each developmental task is relatively associated with their resilience development. Therefore, these developmental tasks are criteria that are used in evaluating preschoolers’ risk and protective factors and outcomes of their resilience manifestation in this study.

With the above challenges in measuring criteria of children’s adaptation and resilience, the vast majority of resilience researchers agree that resilience is a dynamic (Luthar et al., 2000; Schoon, 2006; Theron et al., 2011; Ungar et al., 2007; Walsh, 2016) and developmental process (Cameron, Pinto, & Tapanya, 2014; Gutman, 2010; Lerner et al., 2012; Masten et al., 1990; Masten et al., 2013; Ungar, 2013). Taking age-appropriate and contextual diversities into consideration, this study views young children’s resilience as a dynamic and developmental process, and essentially focuses on decreasing the possibility of inadequate outcomes in child development, including language, social and emotional competence, motor development and so forth. As Cameron et al. (2014) propose, resilience refers to “a positive developmental process” (p. 454), and so resilience in this study is defined as an individual’s progressive development towards adjusting to life difficulties. Life difficulties as a term refer to the inability to achieve the child developmental tasks as Masten and Gewirtz (2006), and Masten et al. (2013) have defined during the early years.

Although the task of evaluating an individual’s resilience is complex, two debates of resilience have implications for this study. The review of the debates
provides opportunities to consider that what the possibility of the concept of resilience can be found at the preschool age, and offers a justification that resilience can be learnt and taught.

Whether or not resilience is natural is debatable. While this study supports that resilience can be taught in educational settings, a perspective of an individual’s inborn resilience should not be overlooked. As a few pioneering resilience researchers believed that people are inherently resilient and that resilience is inborn (Benard, 2007; Henderson, 2007), recent biogenetic research has found convincing evidence of a significant connection between genetic factors and resilience in response to a cause of psychological trauma and stress (Rebekah et al., 2008; Wu et al., 2013; Zimmermann et al., 2011).

However, even though genetic factors are a significant foundation of resilience, these researchers did not overlook the influence of environmental factors on resilience (Rebekah et al., 2008; Wu et al., 2013; Zimmermann et al., 2011). They emphasized the importance of interactions between gene and environments in relation to eliminating environmental risk factors and enhancing protective factors, rather than paying attention to one genetic factor (Rebekah et al., 2008; Zimmermann et al., 2011).

More importantly, resilience is affected by environmental influences (Henderson, 2007, 2012; Henderson & Milstein, 1996, 2003; Lerner et al., 2012; Ungar, 2011). This study takes this view for two reasons. Firstly, Lerner et al. (2012) argue that from the perspective of a child’s rational developmental systems, resilience results from constant interactions between an individual and contexts. As these interactions often occur in school settings, several well-known school programs have been developed and implemented to promote students’ resilience. For instance, Henderson (2007, 2012), and Henderson and Milstein (1996, 2003) have established various resilience prevention and intervention programs and proved that children’s resilience can be cultivated in many ways.

Secondly, this study supports Ungar’s (2011) perspective of social ecology of resilience that, the principle of decentrality advocates “the environment is even more critical to child development than a child’s individual traits” (p. 4). In this conception of
resilience, Ungar (2004, 2008) proposes that an individual has to successfully negotiate with, and navigate towards useful resources in one’s ecologies in order to adjust to adversities. As a result, resilience can be nurtured by having appropriate resources, and be measured by how well an individual can negotiate with the environmental resources.

Furthermore, it is argued that resilience is an alterable and multidimensional capacity. That means that at-risk children may perform well in some areas but have problems in others (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Schoon, 2006). For instance, the study conducted by Harvey and Fine (2010) shows that children who have suffered from their parents’ divorce at an early age might still be persuaded to build trusting relationships with others, and have successful academic achievement at school in their late adolescence or early adulthood. Another example is provided by Schoon (2006), who used ‘academic resilience’ to narrow the evaluation of resilience to the aspect of school performance. The resilient cases in the study of Werner and Smith (1992) refer to social or emotional resilience rather than to academic resilience. Therefore, resilience is not only an unstable capacity but also presents in different ways (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Schoon, 2006). Hence, a person might be resilient in one particular set of circumstances in response to potential risks; but yet not resilient in a different set of circumstances presented.

In this study, resilience refers to a preschooler’s progressive development towards adjusting to life difficulties, such as inadequate language acquisition and movement development, attachment problems with important caregivers, inappropriate emotional expressions, and low learning social skills. Children’s resilience development in this study can be nurtured in preschool settings through teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories. As each child encounters individual risks in their environments, this study states that their resilience manifests in different respects. The next section explores potential risk and protective factors in families, preschools, and communities that influence the children’s resilience.

Definition and debates of protective and risk factors

According to Masten and Gewirtz (2006), protective factors refer to “measurable attributes of individuals, their relationships, or contexts particularly associated with
positive outcomes or development in the context of risk or adversity”, whereas risk factors are defined as “measurable attributes of people, their relationships, or contexts associated with risk” (p. 24). There are several protective and risk factors among personality characteristics (personal level) and individual environments (contextual level) that have been universally identified by researchers (e.g. Benard, 2007; Blum et al., 2002; Henderson, 2007; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2011; McWhirter et al., 2013; Richardson, 2002; Schoon, 2006; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005; Werner, 2006; Werner & Smith, 1992). Protective individual characteristics encompass self-efficacy (Richardson, 2002; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005; Werner, 2006; Werner & Smith, 1992), problem-solving skills (Henderson, 2007; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Masten et al., 1990; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005; Werner, 2006), self-regulation (Lerner et al., 2012), optimism (McWhirter et al., 2013; Richardson, 2002; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005; Werner, 2006), and average intelligence (Blum et al., 2002; Werner, 2006; Werner & Smith, 1992). These positive individual characteristics are opposed to some of the traits linked to individual risk, such as difficult temperament (Blum et al., 2002; McWhirter et al., 2013), and biological vulnerability, pertaining to intellectual impairment or disabilities (Blum et al., 2002; Goldstein & Rider, 2006; Schoon, 2006).

To analyse the protective and risk factors in an environmental level, there are three environments or settings commonly classified; family, school, and community as Table 2.1 demonstrates. Table 2.1 distinctly outlines the protective and risk factors in a contextual level which may affect an individual’s development of resilience. In this study, the contextual level focuses on family and preschool, as well as society and culture in Taiwan. The review of this contextual level in Taiwan is integrated with BEST and discussed later (2.3 BEST as Theoretical Framework).

Table 2.1 integrates the protective and risk factors from Benard (1993, 2007), Blum et al. (2002), Brooks (2006), Hartley (2013), Henderson (2007), Henderson and Milstein (2003), Howard and Johnson (2000), Masten et al. (1990), McWhirter et al. (2013), Schoon (2006), and Werner (2006) into these three environments.
As risk and resilience are “two sides of the same coin” (Ungar, 2004, p. 351), the protective and risk factors outlined in Table 2.1 are by not considered stable (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Kaplan, 2006; Schoon, 2006). This study is in line with literature that risk and protective factors change over time. If individuals being resilient conquer adversities, their risk factors, generally defined by the researchers, can be turned into their protective factors (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Therefore, Kaplan (2006) disputed the concept of risk and protective factors. This is not only because the concept is vague (Kaplan, 2006), but also because in order to decide which factor is protective or risk, the development of resilience depends on the individuals and their particular circumstances and interactions with their environments (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Kaplan, 2006; Schoon, 2006). As Werner and Smith (1992) proposed, disadvantaging factors early on in life might no longer be a risk later in life. Their Kauai longitudinal research (Werner & Smith, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments</th>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td>1. Harmonious family</td>
<td>1. Dysfunctional families</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Stable matrimony</td>
<td>2. Family separation</td>
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<td>4. Appropriate parenting style</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Good family values</td>
<td>4. Child abuse or neglect</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Connectedness</td>
<td>5. Family violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School</strong></td>
<td>1. High attendance rate</td>
<td>1. Drop out</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Positive, warm and caring atmosphere</td>
<td>2. Bullying / juvenile delinquency / suicide attempts / teenage pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Connections with peers and educators</td>
<td>3. Isolated interpersonal network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. High learning motivation and school performance</td>
<td>4. Low academic achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>1. Prosocial media</td>
<td>1. Violence in media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Healthcare facility</td>
<td>2. Technology addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Low unemployment rate</td>
<td>3. Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Protective policy of youths</td>
<td>4. High criminal rate</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Complete welfare policy</td>
<td>5. Social unrest</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Racism</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Globe financial crisis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
showed that one-third of the research participants who were at-risk in their childhood successfully adapted in later life. This means that some individual and environmental conditions might be classified as both protective and risk factors, which is contingent on the outcome of the interactions between an individual and his/her ecologies (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Schoon, 2006).

In addition, a cultural understanding of resilience also influences the judgement of these two factors. Ungar (2004) realized that diverse social and cultural contexts make the classification between protective and risk factors more complex after he and his colleagues completed their series of international cross-cultural research in resilience (e.g. Theron et al., 2011; Ungar et al., 2007; Ungar, Lee, Callaghan, & Boothroyd, 2005; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005). For instance, Theron et al. (2011) revealed that the protective factors of four resilient adolescents who were either Mexican immigrants, or relocated youths in South Africa was associated with their conventional social and cultural traditions, such as “relatedness, a culture of sharing, religious affiliation, and mother tongue” (p. 807). These elements derived from the cultural perspective are valued as resilience-related resources (Theron et al., 2011). Therefore, as this study is conducted in a non-Western culture, Taiwan, the social and cultural perspective could provide an insight into the influential elements as protection or risk factors on children’s resilience. This perspective will be integrated with BEST and extended its discussion in the next section.

To sum up, resilience, and risk and protective factors with their ongoing debates were conceptualized in this section. Although resilience is considered to be both nature and nurture, this study takes the view of contemporary researchers by taking account of the importance of ecological influences. This view places some significance on the potential of teachers’ storytelling using resilience-orientated stories to cultivate preschoolers’ resilience; which is the focus of this study. Furthermore, that protective and risk factors change over time, raises the question of how influential social and cultural elements may be in the development of resilience. This is an important discussion because this study is undertaken in a non-Western country as Taiwan. Therefore, the influence of its social and cultural elements should be reviewed. In the
next section the literature review will focus on resilience research has been conducted in Taiwanese contexts and published over the last three decades.

2.2.2 Resilience research in Taiwan

The total number of resilience studies in the Taiwanese context from 1990 to 2016 is presented in Table 2.2. It is derived from three principle academic databases in Taiwan: Government Research Bulletin; PerioPath Index to Taiwan Periodical Literature System; and the National Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan. The use of keywords to locate the studies was either ‘resilience’ or ‘resiliency’ combined with ‘preschoolers’ or ‘children’ or ‘students’ or ‘schoolchildren’.

There are several observations evident in Table 2.2. Firstly, all resilience studies have been conducted primarily school-age children. Apart from my two research papers published in international journals which focus on preschoolers’ resilience in Taiwan, preschool children in Taiwanese resilience literature have been overlooked. Secondly, there is a scarcity of research undertaken in the Taiwanese context published in international journals. Except for my two empirical papers on resilience, there are just three studies shown in Database D over the past decade (the summary of the studies in Appendix A). Thirdly, there are nine resilience studies funded by the government in Database A, whereas the majority of the unpublished studies related to resilience, shown in Database C, have been conducted by postgraduate students. Lastly, although there are 22 papers shown in Database B, 12 papers are literature reviews. The contrasting content of the other 10 studies is illustrated in Appendix B.
### Table 2.2
Number of Resilience Studies in Taiwanese Context Since 1990

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<td><strong>A</strong> Preschool</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong> Preschool</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>C</strong> Preschool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A = Government Research Bulletin (inaccessible full papers); B = PerioPath Index to Taiwan Periodical Literature System; C = National Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan; D = International databases include ProQuest Education Journals, Psinio, ERIC, and EBSCO host. Others denote research papers without specific participants, such as meta-analysis studies.

<sup>b</sup>Nonspecific refers to general articles without methodology mentioned.

As Table 2.2 indicates, these problematic four points as gaps in resilience literature in Taiwanese contexts highlight the significance of conducting this study. The 110 resilience papers written in English and Chinese/Mandarin and undertaken in Taiwanese were deeply analysed. The summaries of these research papers are shown in Appendix A and B. After analysing them, three issues were identified and pointed to the literature gaps in Taiwanese resilience research in comparison with Western resilience studies. The issues include a lack of longitudinal resilience and government sponsorship, over reliance on a quantitative approach in a group of schoolchildren, and overlooked cultural differences in resilience studies.
A lack of longitudinal resilience research and government sponsorship

In Western countries resilience studies primarily commenced in the 1950s with Kauai longitudinal research (Werner & Smith, 2001). In contrast, in Taiwan, this field of research was noticed in the middle of 1990s and then burgeoned. As the concept of resilience has emerged comparatively late in Taiwan, the term ‘resilience’ has been translated into various other terminologies in different professional fields (Chang, 2007). As a result, it might be difficult to generate longitudinal research on resilience without having a consensus on what it actually means.

Another concern is that over the past 10 years, only nine government sponsored papers have been conducted (see Table 2.2). There is no doubt that the lack of adequate long-term government funding is the primary reason for there being no longitudinal research and very few resilience studies. Without the government investing significantly in long-term resilience research programs, Taiwan will continue to lag behind the rest of the world in the realization of improved practical methods for valid and effective prevention and intervention programs.

Overly focus on exploration of resilience factors in quantitative research in schoolchildren

Table 2.2 and a review of 10 published research papers in Database B demonstrate that school-age children have been the major focus of quantitative research of resilience. This phenomenon raises two principle issues: a lack of attention to preschoolers; and less innovative influential factors found by the same quantitative methodology. First, except for my two publications, there have been no preschool children involved in resilience research, as Table 2.2 shows. Consistent with the literature (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013), the probable interpretation of this issue is because early childhood education has been marginalized. Therefore, resilience research in a fundamental stage of early childhood has been neglected. As several longitudinal researchers in Western countries have collected data on participants at birth, or even during the mothers’ pregnancies, such as the large-scale Kauai research and the Minnesota Parent-Child Project (Werner, 2006), resilience studies in Western
countries is more systematic as a whole. Therefore, this study seeks to highlight the importance of resilience development in this preschool-age group.

As Werner (2006) argues, high-quality early care is associated with fostering resilience and is a significant protective mechanism. Masten and Gewirtz (2006) and Masten et al. (2013) also highlight that as young children are frequently viewed as being particularly vulnerable to adversities, the fundamental development of resilience should begin in the early years. This is the paramount rationale for this study to focus on preschool children.

Another issue is the unbalanced focus on examining resilience factors, as shown in the summaries of the 10 resilience studies published in Chinese/Mandarin from 1990 to 2016 in Database B (Appendix B). The majority of resilience studies have used a quantitative approach to investigate the correlation or the relationship between resilience and protective and risk factors. For instance, a quarter of the quantitative resilience studies investigated the relationships between factors of students' life stress and coping methods (e.g. He & Huang, 2008; Li, 2008; Wang & Xiao, 2007). As a result, the understanding of the factors of influencing children’s resilience is similar and less innovative. This indicates a gap in the implementation of the same methodological approach. This study will implement a qualitative methodology in order to provide insights into the understanding of influential elements on preschoolers’ resilience development through their narratives.

**Overlooked cultural differences in resilience studies**

Cultural issues have rarely been discussed in resilience research (Ungar, 2008). Even though resilience research was conducted in a Taiwanese social and cultural context, there was no discussion related to cultural issues. These are evident in resilience studies investigated in Taiwan and published in international journals in English in Appendix A and in Chinese in Appendix B. For instance, the resilience research of Li (2008), has broadly adopted several instruments which were constructed in Western culture, but the survey was conducted in Taiwan. Although four survey questionnaires in Li’s (2008) study had been well translated, following a back-translated procedure, no cultural factors were discussed. In 2013, Li and her colleagues conducted
resilience surveys in the United States, Taiwan, and China. Interestingly, in contrast to the researchers’ hypothesis, they revealed there was no cultural difference between three college students’ regarding their problem-solving tendencies (Li, Eschenauer, & Yang, 2013).

In the academic databases of Taiwan, the only conversation of cultural differences is the qualitative research studied by Chen (2007). There are a few unique perspectives in Chinese culture when an individual faces adversities, which may impact the interpretation of qualitative interview data. For instance, the proverb, ‘There is no free lunch in one's life’ encourages people to work hard and to be industrious. Therefore, regardless of academic ability, one still may succeed. However, if one greatly endeavours but fails, then this can be a consequence of one's destiny or karma. Another proverb, ‘Man proposes, God disposes’ also attributes this consequence of efforts to uncertainty. This belief is one of the themes engendered in Chen’s research (2007) in order to address the attribute of being resilient.

Another Eastern philosophy indicates that a positive outcome results from the Gods, contexts and individual destiny (Huang, 2004). In a collectivist society, filial piety is a significant social value, and a motivation for working hard is to honour your parents and to avoid being looked down on by others, known as social-oriented achievement motivation (Huang, 2004; Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010). Filial piety and high family values as significant social and cultural protective factors are also congruent with the findings of Chen’s study (2007).

Chen (2007) mentioned that another cultural issue in her study was who should take responsibility for improving an adverse situation. In Western countries, Chen (2007) has argued that poverty and educational issues are viewed as problems of social structure, social injustice and inequality, and political issues, whereas in Chinese society, it is viewed that parents should be responsible for their children when facing the issues. Therefore, when a Chinese family encounters an unexpected adversity, they rarely blame the social welfare system or the government, or ask for their assistance (Chen, 2007).
Resilience research in Taiwan is in its infancy and full of challenges. Despite the few studies undertaken in the Taiwanese context, the discussion from the cultural perspective is still absent. In addition, resilience studies have paid little attention to non-Western countries. Therefore, this study anticipates contributing towards resilience literature from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspective.

In summary, the first section of the literature review discusses the challenges of conceptualization of resilience, and identifies the gaps in resilience studies in Taiwan. In the next section, Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory as a theoretical framework is incorporated with potentially influential elements on an individual’s development of resilience, and a proximal process of BEST guides the exploration of the interaction between an individual and his/her ecologies in this study.

2.3 BEST as Theoretical Framework and Integrated with Resilience

The second part of the literature review is targeted at developing a theoretical framework based on Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (BEST) as used in this study. Since Bronfenbrenner published a paper, ‘Toward an experimental ecology of human development’ in 1977, a basic model of Ecological Systems Theory was fundamentally established and composed of four systems, except for a chronosystem which he added in another article in 1993. The fundamental objective of BEST is to understand the development of human beings and their ecologies from an individual to remote environments over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994). This model not only guides a research investigation of the development of the life course from childhood through adulthood, but also highlights the interactions between developing individuals and ecologies they directly and indirectly encounter, which is the concept of a proximal process (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

BEST provides a systematic investigation of a developing individual because the development takes place in the five systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). BEST also highlights that the reciprocal relationships between the individual and the five ecological systems influence the
outcome of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). With these conceptions of BEST, there are two reasons for applying BEST as a theoretical framework in this study.

The first reason is that BEST is a systematic framework that can explore individuals’ diverse influential protective and risk elements embedded in the ecological systems. This is important because BEST offers the five comprehensive systems to examine the potential influential elements embedded in the context of this study, which is the purpose of RO2. Although the general protective and risk factors, discussed in the previous section, occur in both the individual and the three contextual levels: family, school, and community (Table 2.1), the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979), and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994) offers the more explicit and comprehensive classification of these influential factors on a young individual’s resilience (Figure 2.1). In other words, BEST was developed to explain how child development is affected by diverse institutions, groups or settings which are distributed into the five systems in accordance with the immediate and/or remote influence of these surroundings on the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994).

The second reason is through BEST, reciprocal interactions and relationships between preschoolers and their ecologies in Taiwanese public preschools can be captured. This is because Bronfenbrenner’s mesosystem, exosystem, and proximal processes emphasize environmental influences on child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). These conceptions offer an opportunity to interpret preschoolers’ influential interactions with their ecologies on their resilience development, which is a focus of RO2.

In this section, BEST is briefly demonstrated in Figure 2.1 and is integrated with the discussion of some influential elements and interactions on preschoolers’ resilience development (see Table 2.1). Harvey and Delfabbro (2004) have argued that despite the strength of BEST in describing a universal phenomenon and general interactions, the weakness is unable to deepen the understanding of the process of child development in specific social and cultural contexts. To strengthen the exploration of RO2, BEST discussed here incorporates three types of resilience research: 1. the findings of cultural
influential elements revealed by a series of international cross-cultural research in resilience from Ungar’s (2011) perspective of social ecology (e.g. Cameron et al., 2014; Theron et al., 2011; Ungar et al., 2007); 2. the cultural discussion of resilience studies in minority and marginalized populations, and non-Western cultures and contexts (e.g. Gunnestad, 2006; Gunnestad, Larsen, & Nguluka, 2010; Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013); and 3. from the perspective of Taiwanese social and cultural contexts.
Figure 2.1 Theoretical framework: An individual’s protective and risk factors in BEST

2.3.1 Individual system: Three Person characteristics and resilience

Demand characteristics are comprised of all an individual’s physical appearance, such as ages, gender, racial colours and disabilities (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). Children with disabilities have been regarded as having a risk factor affecting their resilience (Blum et al., 2002; Linke & Radich, 2010; Schoon, 2006; Werner & Smith, 2001), whereas Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) argue that this marginalized group has been excluded from being resilient as discussed in the previous section. This study takes this classification of the demand characteristics to evaluate preschoolers’ personal influential elements on their resilience.

Resource characteristics refer to developmental assets that can improve individuals with physical disabilities and severe and persistent illness, such as knowledge, skills, and resources they can access (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). As this study focuses on young children, their family resources will be significant assets for their resilience development.

Force characteristics refer to “person attributes as apathy, inattentiveness, unresponsiveness, lack of interest in one’s surroundings, feelings of insecurity, shyness, or a general tendency to avoid or withdraw from activity” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1009). This study focuses on preschoolers’ learning motivation and the tendency of participating in learning activities as their force characteristics.

2.3.2 Microsystem and resilience

The microsystem refers to a series of social roles, physical activities, and the closest interpersonal relationship between an individual and his/her surroundings, such as a family, school and peer groups (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994). Most importantly, the microsystem is the most direct and influential system in child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994). In this study, therefore, the particular influential elements, such as parents/caregivers, and preschool teachers, and risk and protective factors embedded in both families and preschools involved in the microsystem are explored (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994).
Family as an influential key on children’s resilience. The vast majority of researchers agree with the importance of family in fostering children’s resilience (Blum et al., 2002; Gutman, 2010; Masten et al., 1990; Masten et al., 2013; McWhirter et al., 2013; Sameroff, 2006; Walsh, 2016; Werner & Smith, 1992). Walsh (1996, 2003, 2016) argues that family strengths as a source of resilience should be identified in order to cope more effectively with crises, from within or outside the family, in particular children in a single-parent family or a family raising a child with a disability. Additionally, although parents and parenting styles have been explored frequently in resilience research as an important protective factor, when inept parenting or domestic maltreatment occur, children are at risk (Bernier, Carlson, & Whipple, 2010; Herbers et al., 2011; Howard & Johnson, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1992). Living in poverty or a low-income family is also deemed a risk factor compared with financially stable families (Garmezy, 1991; Schoon, 2006; Walsh, 1996; Werner & Smith, 1992).

Family values can be either a protective or risk factor in an individual’s development, in particular in minorities. Gunnestad (2006) provided youth in Latino, North American Indian First Nation, and African cultures as examples, and studied resilience in two sets of minorities (Gunnestad et al. (2010), the San people of Botswana and the Travellers in Norway. For example, a tight family bond for Latino youth was found to be a positive influence, however if the family had problems, such as drug abuse or violence, then the children were found to exhibit more high risk behaviors (Gunnestad, 2006). The value placed on family in Latino culture is much higher than in others which leads to an increase in either vulnerabilities or protection for Latino youth.

Another example is in African tribes, where the parents’ and extended family members’ opinions can highly influence young people’s decision making, compared with Norwegian parents who support their children making their own decisions (Gunnestad, 2006). Therefore, the influence of the family values in children’s resilience presents diversely in different cultures.

Similary, family connectedness as a crucial protective factor in the development of children’s resilience was found in two cross-cultural studies by Cameron et al. (2014) and Theron et al. (2011). For instance, a Thai boy’s filial relationship with his father was one of the crucial protections over his migratory transition (Cameron et al., 2014).
Common family structures in Taiwan consist of not only the nuclear family, but also single-parent and extended families. In terms of a single-parent family resulting from divorce, it has constantly been viewed as a risk factor because of its association with insecure attachment (Bowlby, 1971), mental health problems (Størksen, Roysamb, Moun, & Tambs, 2005), unsatisfactory scholastic performance (Amato, 2006; Soeker, 2014), disruptive behaviour problems (Størksen et al., 2005), and their challenges in future life (Amato, 2000, 2006; Hetherington, 2006; Soeker, 2014). However, Levine (2009) challenges the definition that single mothers are inadequate. In her qualitative research, 15 single mothers who had a child with special needs positively transformed the “stigma of the single mother” into a role of “chosen mothers” (Levine, 2009, p. 409). There is very little recent research that supports the potential positive side of the single-parent family.

An extended family refers to at least three generations living together, and sometimes including paternal unmarried siblings (National Statistic, 2012). This traditional form of family structure in Taiwan is likely to feature in this study, despite the substantially decreasing percentage of the extended family (National Statistic, 2012). Living in an extended family means that young children’s resilience can be affected not only by their parents, but also by their grandparents. However, little research attention is directed toward identifying the influence of grandparents as significant caregivers (Breitkreuz, Wunderli, Savage, & McConnell, 2014; Downie, Hay, Horner, Wichmann, & Hislop, 2010; Dunn, Fergusson, & Maughan, 2006). Breitkreuz et al. (2014) highlight extended family members as significant resources in the development of children’s resilience. In Taiwanese culture, the role of grandparents is not passive in comparison to the Western culture. The grandparents frequently and actively engage in their grandchildren’s daily care, particularly in an extended family (Chen, 2016). As a result, the influence of grandparents on grandchildren’s development is likely to occur in this study.

**Preschool as an important influence.** Childcare centres or preschools are young children’s direct environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1993; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). As the vast majority of children at preschools in Taiwan stay at least seven hours a day, the preschools and preschool teachers are these children’s significant others. Due
to this direct influence, resilience-promoting programs such as Kidsmatter\textsuperscript{3} and Mindmatters\textsuperscript{4}, funded by the Australian Federal Government, are implemented in primary and secondary schools. Both are successful in helping students and educators build their resilience (Slee, Dix, & Askell-Williams, 2011). Although most resilience research is focused on schools rather than preschools, it is important to explore the influence of the preschool on individual resilience. In this study, the influential elements, such as preschool teachers’ storytelling, resilience-orientated stories, learning activities, the interaction between the teachers and children, and the relationship between parents and teachers are concerns.

Besides childcare centres and preschools, in Taiwan, a cram school could also be a child’s first school. A cram school in this study, refers to a school attended after the preschooler’s school-day finishes, which provides both extracurricular activities, such as music and sport, and academic training to approach specific goals, such as pre-learning Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, Mathematics, English or Science (Shih & Yi, 2014). From a Taiwanese social and cultural perspective, the existence of cram schools has historical and cultural meaning. As the historical examination system in Chinese culture has lasted more than a thousand years, education plays a determinative role (Yang, 1995). Under the traditional social value of education, parents’ expectations for their children’s academic performance are apparent. Therefore, the influence of cram schools on the development of children’s resilience in this study is anticipated.

\subsection*{2.3.3 Mesosystem and resilience}

The mesosystem delineates the connection between individual microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994). This means that the interaction between protective and risk factors in the individual microsystem also takes place in the mesosystem. As a few influential elements mentioned in the microsystem, mesosystems can be explored in this study as the interactions between preschool teachers, cram school teachers, and children; and between families, preschools, and cram schools.

\textsuperscript{3} Kidsmatter funded by Australian Government Department of Health and Aging is a framework of caring mental health issues and well-being for early childhood education and care services and primary schools. Reference: https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/

\textsuperscript{4} MindMatters is also funded by Australian Government Department of Health and Aging but focuses on secondary schools. Reference: https://www.mindmatters.edu.au/
2.3.4 Exosystem and resilience

The exosystem comprises of the extensive process of the mesosystem, including two or more settings, such as a community, neighbourhood, organization and even departments of a government (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994), and the mass media (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The relationship between an individual and the exosystem is further apart than the relationship between an individual, the microsystem, and the mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994). In other words, the younger the children are the less direct influence the exosystem has. With Bronfenbrenner’s categorization of the exosystem, this study expects to explore the linkage between families, preschools, and hospitals or temples.

However, mass media has been categorized as part of an exosystem of BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In 1977, the media was an indirect influence on an individual’s development, whereas in the 21st century, due to the development of technology and globalization, the global penetration rate of media usage is innumerable. As a result, the influence of using media, such as watching TV and movies, and playing games on tablets or smartphones, on preschoolers’ lived experience is expected to appear in this study.

2.3.5 Macrosystem and resilience

The macrosystem refers to the overarching systems as cultures, beliefs, customs, lifestyles and political systems, where explicit and implicit ideologies are developed (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994) argues that the influence of a macrosystem is indirect on child development and through particular agencies, such as caregivers, teachers, or neighbours. As the macrosystem foregrounds the importance of cultural influences, this study conducted in Taiwan, should pay more attention to the richness of Taiwanese multiple traditions and cultures.

Multiple religious traditions as part of Taiwanese lived experiences. Taiwan is the second largest degree of religious diversity in the world (Grim, 2015). There are more than 27 religions registered in Taiwan, with Daoism and Buddhism having the largest number of followers (Department of Statistics, 2013). Daoism, initially
developed from Laozi’s philosophy in ancient China, forms the concept of multiple beliefs (Chiu, 1999). Daoism has gradually become entwined with Chinese folks beliefs and traditions (Chiu, 1999). Additionally, Buddhism is also one of the most influential religions on lived experiences of the Chinese people, and has similar concepts of multiple traditions like Daoism. Taiwanese people practice their beliefs at prestigious temples, public or private shrines, or at home where some families set up their Gods’ room for daily worship. These religious congregations are part of Taiwanese communities located in public and residential areas. Multiple religious traditions might indirectly influence preschoolers’ lived experiences.

**Education and social welfare systems as potential influences.** The Early Childhood Education and Care Act (ECECA) as an education policy, and social welfare systems are involved in the macrosystem, which is an indirect influence on a child’s development. ECECA and the other education regulations and policies have been considerably reformed over the last two decades (Lin, Wang, Li, & Chang, 2014). These reforms might affect parents’ expectations for their children’s educational choices. In addition, the social welfare system in Taiwan might impact on parents who have children with disabilities. These potential influences should be taken into account in this study.

### 2.3.6 Chronosystem and proximal process

The chronosystem is the latest system developed in BEST and points out that the importance of individual development changes constantly over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Time is the primary element in the chronosystem as it is not only comprised of the development of individual characteristics, but also the environments where the individual, over time, encounters constant change (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The chronosystem has been extended to the three different concepts of time:

- **Microtime** refers to continuity versus discontinuity in ongoing episodes of proximal process. Mesotime is the periodicity of these episodes across broader time intervals, such as days and weeks. Finally, Macrotime focuses on the changing expectations and events in the larger society, both within and across generations, as they affect and are affected by, processes and outcomes of human development over the life course (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796).
This study applies the first two concepts of time to the analysis of the development of children’s resilience for the following reasons. The duration of the data collection is only one semester, but macrotime should be adopted in a longitudinal study. Teachers’ storytelling is employed regularly once a week, and the data is gathered for at least 12 hours a week in each preschool. As a result, through teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories, the purpose of this study is to explore the manifestation of preschoolers’ resilience observed over a semester.

Besides BEST as a systematic framework examining preschoolers’ influential elements on their resilience embedded in these ecological systems, the rationale for using BEST as a theoretical framework is to provide analysis of the interactions in children’s lived experiences of resilience within the ecological systems. This is because a proximal process as the engine of BEST emphasises the interactions between an individual and immediate settings, and also the dynamic interactions among settings in the mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Initially, BEST highlights the importance of proximal process in child development because:

A proximal process involves a transfer of energy between the developing human being and the persons, objects, and symbols in the immediate environment. The transfer may be in either direction or both; that is, from the developing person to features of the environment, from features of the environment to the developing person, or in both directions, separately or simultaneously (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118).

In this explanation, proximal processes emphasize the influence of immediate ecologies on child development and argue that the interaction between the child and direct environments is stronger than remote settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). As RO2 in this study aims to explore the interactions between the influential elements on the development of children’s resilience in preschoolers’ narratives, the proximal process in the interactions between individuals, preschools, families and cram schools can be predicted.

To sum up, BEST is used as the theoretical framework for this study, and in doing so are integrated aspects of the resilience studies reviewed into the framework of BEST, as illustrated in Figure 2.1. This theoretical framework indicates potential
protective and risk factors of preschool children in both preschool and family settings, as the preschoolers’ lived experiences in relation to resilience is embedded in these ecologies. Through the teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories, participant children’s lived experiences in association with influential elements on their resilience in their narratives can be identified within the five systems of BEST. Furthermore, the interaction between the elements can also be analyzed by the theoretical framework. The following discussion will focus on the connection between children’s narratives of personal experiences and teachers’ storytelling in the context of Taiwanese preschools.

2.4 Storytelling and Narrative

This section reviews the literature on storytelling and narrative, and clarifies how the terms ‘storytelling’ and ‘narrative’ will be used in this study. The terms storytelling and narrative have been used interchangeably in the literature (e.g. Collins & Cooper, 1997; East, Jackson, O'Brien, & Peters, 2010; Nguyen, Stanley, Stanley, & Wang, 2015; Stanley et al., 2015). In this study, storytelling is used to refer to two forms of storytelling practices. One is a preschool pedagogy, referring to the pedagogical practice that preschool teachers have of using storytelling as part of their teaching approach. In this study, the teachers tell resilience-orientated stories in the individual story time in each public preschool in Taiwan, which is called teachers’ storytelling. The other form is children’s storytelling, including the personal accounts of their lived experiences, engagement with teachers’ storytelling, and volunteer storytelling in relation to the resilience-orientated story. Additionally, children’s narratives in this study as collaborative narratives contain not only their accounts and storytelling, but also the researcher’s interpretation of these. As a result, children’s narratives of resilience as the focus of RO1 are associated with the children’s storytelling voices and my interpretive voice in response to the development of their resilience.

Storytelling is a powerful approach in teachers’ teaching and pedagogy, as well as being simultaneously engaging for young children in learning (Collins & Cooper, 1997; Daniel, 2012). This section of the literature review aims to outline the beneficial impact of storytelling on the development of children’s resilience in this study. The
review focuses on three aspects: teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy; children’s storytelling and resilience; and features of children’s narratives.

2.4.1 Teacher’s storytelling as a pedagogy for promoting children’s resilience

The implementation of teachers’ storytelling in this study is regarded as an effective intervention in order to promote young children’s resilience. Storytelling used in psychological therapy is beneficial to the development of children’s resilience (Crawford et al., 2004; Pomerantz, 2007); however, a lack of empirical research directly proves that teachers’ storytelling can be the useful intervention to facilitate children’s resilience at preschool, which is a gap of the literature. The intention of this section of the literature review is to narrow the gap in order to support the positive relationship between storytelling as teachers’ pedagogy and children’s resilience.

Firstly, successful child development can facilitate an individual’s resilience (KidsMatter, n.d.). As the definition of young children’s resilience in this study discussed in the beginning of this chapter (2.2.1), to remind progressive development children have to be able to successfully adjust to life difficulties. The difficulties here refer to the inability to achieve the child developmental tasks, such as language acquisition, attachment with important caregivers, fundamental development of child movement, appropriate emotional expressions, and learning social skills (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013). These developmental tasks are mainly associated with various aspects of language capacity, social and emotional competence, and motor development. As this study focuses on children at the age of five, in terms of the stage of their language development for example, full sentences and complex utterances should appear, and narrative and communication skills should be developed properly (Hoff, 2008, 2014). In terms of social and emotional development, it involves social interpersonal interactions, emotional awareness, and self-regulation (Fabes, Gaertner, & Popp, 2008; Thompson & Lagattuta, 2008; Thompson, Meyer, & Jochem, 2009). According to Thompson et al. (2009), 5-year-old children can have appropriate self-regulation of emotions, express their emotions properly and enable to understand others’ emotions. Negative emotional regulation affects children’s interpersonal relationship and social interactions, and has difficulties to maintain friendships (Thompson &
Lagattuta, 2008; Thompson et al., 2009). Consequently, when children are able to successfully overcome these developmental tasks, these would become the protective factors of their resilience development, and vice versa.

Secondly, storytelling as teachers’ pedagogy can achieve children’s developmental tasks that is indirectly support an individual’s resilience. According to the literature, there are numerous advantages to utilizing storytelling in teaching as pedagogy, such as enhancing academic skills (Collins & Cooper, 1997; Fredericks, 2003), improving language learning (Aram, 2006; Dawkins & Oneill, 2011; Hanline, Whalon, & Woods, 2007; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Norris, Hoffman, & Crowe, 2000), prompting critical and creative thinking (Collins & Cooper, 1997; Fredericks, 2003) and encouraging conversations (Collins & Cooper, 1997). These benefits of implementing storytelling in a classroom indicate the importance of teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy, and the strong relationship with children’s language development. For instance, as the language development of children at the age of five is to extend their vocabularies, practice verbal grammar, comprehend meaning of conversations, and enable to use complex sentences properly (Hoff, 2008, 2014), teachers’ storytelling supports several oral language competences by increasing the number of vocabularies and phrases, providing language contexts to understand how to use them, and demonstrating complex sentences (Aram, 2006; Dawkins & Oneill, 2011; Hanline et al., 2007; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Norris et al., 2000). Moreover, some of the research has demonstrated the efficacy of storytelling for emergent literacy of children in childhood education (Justice & Pullen, 2003; Neumann & Neumann, 2009). This increases the opportunities for improving the children’s academic performance (Justice & Pullen, 2003). It follows that when children have successful scholastic achievement, resilience also is likely to be promoted (Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Werner & Smith, 1992).

The benefits of storytelling as an effective intervention of children’s resilience are also likely to facilitate their social and emotional development. For example, as Thompson and Lagattuta (2008) point out, young children’s emotional development is not only intimately connected to their social development, but also closely related to their psychological well-being. Developing emotional self-regulation, such as managing
feelings and behaviours, in the early years is important (Thompson & Lagattuta, 2008; Thompson et al., 2009), and through listening to teachers’ storytelling, children can learn some skills in emotional understanding and managing negative impulses by imitating how story characters as role models appropriately express their feelings (Crawford et al., 2004), and adopting possible solutions provided by the story (Crawford et al., 2004; Fredericks, 2003; Livo & Rietz, 1986). As children’s capacity for emotional development is indispensable to their social competence, such as building interpersonal relationships, interacting with peers, and cooperating with others (Fabes et al., 2008; Thompson & Lagattuta, 2008; Thompson et al., 2009), storytelling also affords good opportunities to understand various perspectives by projecting themselves into stories (Fredericks, 2003), and learning problem-solving skills in the story (Crawford et al., 2004; Fredericks, 2003; Livo & Rietz, 1986). More importantly, storytelling can comfort children’s feelings (Conway & McDonough, 2006; Crawford et al., 2004; Fredericks, 2003), and therefore children’s social and emotional capacities can be facilitated, which is critical to their psychological well-being.

As a result, the use of storytelling in teaching can not only enhance children’s language learning, but also provide an exercise in social and emotional development. This provides a potentially positive influence on the development of children’s resilience. From a teacher’s perspective, these benefits of teachers’ storytelling show that children’s resilience is likely to be promoted through this useful pedagogy.

2.4.2 Promoting children’s narratives to better understand their lived experiences of resilience

Clandinin and Connelly (1990) propose that “storytelling is a reconstruction of experience” (p. 245). This argument supports the observations of the researcher, as a preschool teacher. Preschoolers, as both story listeners and storytellers, reconstruct their lived experiences through engaging in teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories. Through storytelling, children can express their feelings freely (Crawford et al., 2004; Daniel, 2012), which promotes the development of their psychological well-being (Crawford et al., 2004) and emotional resilience (Berson & Baggerly, 2009; Conway & McDonough, 2006). For young children facing stress and adversities, engaging in storytelling can buffer some of the risk factors in their lives and
comfort them emotionally (Conway & McDonough, 2006; Crawford et al., 2004; Fredericks, 2003). This also develops children’s resilience positively.

Promoting competence in children’s storytelling is important. However, there are two challenges to hearing children’s voices directly in research. Initially, the loss of the child’s voice in class might be a result of spending too much time on reading, writing, and other learning disciplines, so that there is a reduction in the time for children to practice their narratives (Daniel, 2012). Possibly, the other reason is that teachers often speak on behalf of their students (Lewis, 2009). In other words, teachers should not try to represent their students and speak out for them. The voice of students should not be missing but be encouraged to be listened to in a research context (Lewis, 2009) as human beings are natural storytellers and their narratives should not be on another’s behalf (Hendry, 2007). Regardless of the child’s age, even young children have their own stories to tell as their narrative has meaning to them (Tsai, 2007), especially young children who encounter at-risk ecologies.

Children may have different lived experiences when they engage with a story told by teachers. As a result, how they narrate their stories associated with the teachers’ resilience-orientated storytelling is one of the main concerns in this study. Through the understanding of children’s narratives of resilience, this study provides a platform for their voices to be heard.

2.4.3 Potential characteristics of children’s narrative

As preschoolers’ narratives are the focus of this study, they are presented in distinct forms and multiple ways in comparison to the narratives of adults. For instance, due to language competence, adult narratives are frequently seen as monologues or are conducted one-to-one with a researcher, whereas young children’s narratives can be more flexible and diverse. As Puroila et al. (2012a, p. 192) characterize young children’s narratives as “fragmentariness, multimodality, collaboration, and a complex relationship between the narrative and the context”, these characteristics show narratives in the group of young research participants are unique and meaningful. For example, one of the characteristics of young children’s narratives is “multimodality,” meaning that there are diverse narrative expressions, such as verbal and writing
narratives (e.g. talking, whispering, singing, drawing and writing), non-verbal emotional expressions (e.g. anger and laughing), body languages (e.g. moving, acting and gestures), and silence and no response (Puroila et al., 2012a). As mentioned, narrative researchers observe that to reduce language barriers, the way young children express their experiences and communicate with their surroundings differs from adults (Estola, Farquhar, & Puroila, 2014; Kinnunen & Einarsdottir, 2013; Kinnunen & Puroila, 2016; Puroila et al., 2012a; Puroila, Estola, & Syrjälä, 2012b). Through learning aforementioned multimodal expressions at children’s early age, researchers can deepen the understanding of children’s lived experiences and enhance the credibility of the researchers’ interpretations (Puroila et al., 2012b). As a result, this study will observe how preschoolers in Taiwan use these multimodal narratives to express their lived experiences of resilience.

It is expected that children’s storytelling is an interactive and collaborative process between the children, teachers, peers, and the researcher in this study. As Livo and Rietz (1986, p. 9) argue that “audiences and tellers negotiate a story into being in a highly dynamic interactive process,” children’s narratives in this study have a high possibility of being involved in the interactions between teachers and participant children. This is because when preschoolers engage in teachers’ storytelling and discussion, collaborative narratives spontaneously occur. In terms of collaboration as one of the characteristics in preschoolers’ narratives, the prevalence of children’s narratives involving their peers in a group situation is evident in preschool settings (Puroila et al., 2012a). In this respect, narrative of the participants in this study is likely to be generated in their interactions with peers as the form of multiple voices in a narrative text. Lastly, as children’s narrative is a dynamic process of the interaction between storytellers (participants) and a listener (researcher), it might occur in a one-to-one interview context embedded in a preschool classroom (Livo & Rietz, 1986). Hence, the researcher is also part of collaborative and interactive narrative process.

To sum up, this section clarifies teachers’ storytelling and children’s narrative. The former supports teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy to facilitate the development of children’s resilience. Children’s narrative in this study contains their accounts and storytelling with the researcher’s interpretation of these. When
preschoolers engage in teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories, the focus of RO1 as children’s narratives of resilience can be captured. To better understand these preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience, listening to their voices and learning from the diverse forms of their narratives are paramount in this study.

2.5 Summary

Resilience is important to individuals of all ages. In this chapter, a review of resilience research globally and locally reveals an opening for Taiwanese researchers and educators to conduct research. In terms of resilience studies in Taiwan, there are some important considerations. Firstly, resilience studies have received little attention from researchers, and very little support from the educational authorities. Second, there is not only a lack of longitudinal resilience research, but also no preschool children have served as research participants. In addition, cultural differences in resilience studies have been overlooked in Taiwan. As a result, in order to narrow the gap in current literature, this study is a resilience study designed to look at children under six years old in the Taiwanese preschool context.

This resilience study conceptualizes influential elements on the development of children’s resilience from the perspectives of Western literature and Taiwanese social and cultural context that are embedded in the theoretical framework based on BEST (Figure 2.1). Additionally, a proximal process of BEST affords a guidance to interpret the interactions between the influential elements in individuals and environments.

Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy to promote children’s resilience, this study aims to explore the two Research Objectives. RO1: Explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories and then engage in story discussions. RO2: Explore the content of children’s narratives to identify some influential elements and interactions between the children and their influential ecologies on resilience development through the lens of BEST. In line with the purpose of this study, the narrative approach as a methodology will be adopted and discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 3: Method for the Study

3.1 Overview

The previous two chapters have addressed the importance of understanding the development of children’s resilience in their early years. This study aims to explore preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience as they engage in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions. The use of BEST as a theoretical framework will provide an opportunity to analyse the interrelatedness of children’s experience of resilience to other elements in their ecologies. In doing so, the study addresses two main Research Objectives:

RO1: Explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories and then engage in story discussions.

RO2: Explore the content of children’s narratives to identify some influential elements and interactions between the children and their influential ecologies on the resilience development through the lens of BEST.

Based on RO1 and RO2, this chapter presents and describes the study’s methodological approach and rationale. As this study is situated in an interpretivist paradigm, BEST is used to frame an understanding of the children’s experiences and interactions within diverse social contexts, embedded in the ecological systems. A narrative methodology enables exploration of the participant children’s lived experience of resilience at preschool. As the epistemology of narrative research highlights an understanding of knowledge as embedded within the interaction between individuals and their social contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000), providing a comprehensive research context is essential. So this study foregrounds the significance of the non-Western culture in which it is based, Taiwan, which provides a unique social and cultural research context in contrast to the predominant Western settings that populate the literature at present.
Multiple sources of data collection encompass classroom observations, interviews with teachers, participant children and their parents, children’s documents, and my research field notes. In light of the Research Objectives (RO1 and RO2), this study developed two analytical frameworks to analyse the multiple sources of data collection in the two phases of an analytic process. These are: 1. a narrative analytical framework based on Riessman’s (1993, 2008) dialogic/performance analysis; and 2. a theoretically thematic framework integrating BEST (1977, 1993, 1994, 2006) with resilience literature.

The chapter closes with a discussion of considerations of trustworthiness regarding this qualitative narrative study, and the importance of ethical research relationships.

3.2 Interpretivist Paradigm

Underpinning this qualitative study is the interpretivist paradigm, also referred to as constructivism (Creswell, 2014). Constructivists assume that “reality is socially constructed” (Mertens, 2005, p. 12). As an interpretivist researcher, my role is not only to understand the world/reality that the participants live in and experience, but also to seek the meaning of their experiences (Creswell, 2014; Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011; Mertens, 2005). The ontological perspective of interpretivism is that knowledge is constructed by both researchers and research participants whose lived experience and interactions take place in their reality (Lincoln et al., 2011). Hence, there is a subjective reality that the interpretivist researcher attempts to apprehend through “the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge” (Mertens, 2005, p. 14).

The interpretivist ontology is to explore the nature of constructed reality, and so this study is aims to understand how preschoolers in Taiwan construct the meaning of their lived experiences in relation to resilience. Additionally, an interpretivist epistemological perspective values learning about the process of thinking in regard to the nature of knowledge (Lincoln et al., 2011; Mertens, 2005). This understanding of knowledge derives from interaction with the constructed reality between what the researcher knows and the participant’s experience (Lincoln et al., 2011; Mertens, 2005). As a result, this narrative study seeks to understand preschoolers’ lived experiences in
relation to the body of knowledge of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling and resilience-orientated stories. Under this interpretivist paradigm, the application of a narrative approach is designed to capture young children’s construction of the realities of their lived experiences, and enables the researcher to expand the knowledge of resilience by understanding these children’s interactions with their teachers’ storytelling. The narrative approach as a methodology for this study is discussed in the next section.

3.3 Methodology: Narrative Approach

As Bruner (1986, 1987) asserted there are various ways of knowing knowledge and narrative knowing principally contributes to the constructivist (interpretivist) paradigm. Moreover, the significance of the narrative approach is to capture personal experiences in reality pertaining to the interaction between individuals and their social context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This central concept of narrative as a methodology is a basis for understanding the complexity of preschool children’s experiences in relation to resilience and a focus of this study. In this way, including the children’s experience of learning resilience through engaging in teachers’ storytelling and participating in the interaction between teachers and peers, effectively reflects the purpose of the study, and is achieved by adopting the narrative approach.

3.3.1 Personal experiences in response to resilience learning

According to Clandinin and Connelly (1994, 2000), personal experience is an essential pathway for understanding individuals and for learning knowledge. Various experiences are represented in the form of storytelling frequently employed in the Taiwanese preschool curriculum as teachers’ pedagogy (Daniel, 2012). Through the various characters of resilience-orientated stories in this study, resilience models for young children in order to provide problem-solving strategies and comfort negative emotions (Conway & McDonough, 2006; Crawford et al., 2004; Fredericks, 2003).

The points of interest in this study are the participant children’s experience of engaging with the teachers’ storytelling, of interacting with the stories teachers told, and of narrating their own story. Analyses of such experiences illustrate how these children
have interpreted resilience and applied it to their personal lives. An analysis of the potential relatedness between the resilience-orientated stories told by teachers and the children’s consequent responses provides valuable information about this pedagogy, and offers new theoretical insights about the resilience development in young Taiwanese children.

Additionally, Clandinin and Connelly (1994, 2000) expanded Dewey’s concept of experience by explaining that individual experiences are not only continuous but also may lead to further experiences. This means that past experience is likely to contribute to future experiences. The children’s resilience learning through engaging in teachers’ storytelling in this study is significant because such learning experience enables preschool children to recall and transfer that experience to future difficulties. From preschool teachers’ viewpoints, the resilience-orientated story is an effective medium that facilitates young children’s resilience development. This successful teaching experience would encourage them to take advantage of the story more widely in their future curricula.

Narrative research provides a useful method to understand the individual’s lived experience and the process of the construction of meaning (Bruner, 1986, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988). Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling, preschool children are enabled to make new meaning in their lives when encountering new challenges. Although “meaning is not inherent in an act or experience” (Josselson, 2011, p. 225), meaning is constructed by the interactive experiences of the participant children engaging in teachers’ storytelling and narrating their stories, and by the explicit connection between the understanding and interpretation of the children’s narratives.

3.3.2 The role of narrative inquiry

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) conceptualized narrative inquiry as “a way of characterizing the phenomena of human experience” (p. 2). More specifically, Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20) defined narrative inquiry as:

…a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher[s] and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progress in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of
living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people’s lives, both individual and social. … narrative inquiry is stories lived and told.

In this definition of narrative inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) highlight the importance of personal experiences and social interactions in terms of how personal lived experiences take place across both individuals and social interactions. This core concept of narrative inquiry and the theoretical framework in this study based on BEST (see Figure 2.2) is complementary in relation to social and contextual interactions. As the engine of BEST, a proximal process described in Chapter 2 explicates how interactions between individuals and their surroundings within the ecological systems offer an authentic understanding of personal experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). As a result, a narrative approach used in conjunction with the BEST theoretical framework will support this study to take account of the role that participant children’s families, teachers’ storytelling in different preschool settings, and to broader social and cultural elements that may reflect the particulars of this Taiwanese setting; and how these may affect children’s resilience development. This exploration, of the social and cultural contexts and the potential interaction with children’s resilience development, will also enable this study to address the various gaps in the current research literature on resilience development, as outlined in the literature review.

Furthermore, the narrative approach empowers the researcher to “include myself as an active participant” in preschool children’s narratives and the interpretation (Riessman, 2008, p. 116). In order to facilitate this narrative study, I, as a narrative researcher, have had involvement in the three preschool contexts and with preschool children’s, parents, teachers and staff. My participation cannot be separated from these social contexts. Hence, Mishler (1986) argued that narratives are not found by the researchers, but they participate in their creation. Riessman (2008) further agrees that “the investigator becomes an active presence in the text” (p.105). In this way, narrative researchers have to acknowledge that they carry their own identities with them into the social contexts, and this reflexively affects how they see research participants’ narratives and interpret them (Riessman, 2008). I recognize this influence on this study as concomitant feature of narrative inquiry. Hence, including my lived experiences in
This study is one of multiple data sources and is as important as observing and interviewing preschool children's narratives in terms of their resilience and the lived experience of the social interaction.

### 3.4 Method: Contexts and Data Collection

This study applied an approach of multiple methods of data collection for three reasons: providing multiple evidence to enhance trustworthiness of this study; enabling in-depth exploration of meanings of children’s narratives; and supporting each participant’s social contexts by thick descriptions.

The first reason is that the utilization of multiple data is more effective than using a single data source, especially in studies relating to young children (Puroila et al., 2012a). For example, as this study investigates the lived experiences of preschool children, whose interview data might not provide as much rich information as those of adult interviewees, multiple data sources can complement inadequate interview data due to the limitation of children’s language development. The use of multiple data sources as triangulation of data is also one of the important techniques to improve trustworthiness in this study (Creswell, 2013).

Moreover, in-depth exploration of the effectiveness of the resilience-orientated stories can achieve preschool children’s experiences of resilience (Creswell, 2008, 2012). As each preschool participant’s story involves unique lived experiences, through in-depth exploration of each preschool child’s narrative, this study can capture not only meanings of these experiences, but also the influential elements and their interactions on resilience development.

The last reason is that a thick description of a phenomenon in a real-life context is necessary in a narrative study (Creswell, 2008, 2012). This is because rich descriptions help to illustrate unique social contexts in three Taiwanese public preschools as a non-Western culture, and contribute to a significant understanding of resilience studies to the existing Western cultural literature. In addition, the social context in this study is also embedded in BEST. By the use of a thick description in the description of research contexts, interactions between young participants and the
Influential elements on the development of their resilience can be explicitly captured within the five systems in BEST. In order to acquire an in-depth exploration of children’s narratives, the richness of the lived experiences, and the exclusive contexts in the three preschools in Taiwan, an approach of multiple methods of data collection was implemented in this narrative study.

Prior to the description of the approach of multiple methods of data collection used, this section elaborates on the contexts of three public preschools in Taiwan, followed by the selection of the participant children from these preschools.

### 3.4.1 Contexts of research sites

The research context is one of the fundamental characteristics of qualitative research, and the most significant difference compared to quantitative research (Creswell, 2012). Especially, narrative inquiry foregrounds the place commonplace, which denotes “the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequences of places where the inquiry and events take place” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, pp. 480-481). This emphasizes the importance of the sequence of places, as not only the geographic places where my participants and I came from, but also how the stories from the three Taiwanese public preschools shaped who we are and our lived experiences in this study.

The selection of the three preschools is convenience sampling. My personal background as a preschool teacher, combined with my postgraduate study in Early Childhood Education in Taiwan has provided me with connections to colleagues who work in public preschools in Taiwan. Although the three public preschools are situated in the third biggest city in Taiwan (as illustrated in the hand drawn map in Figure 3.1), their geographic locations are different. With this difference, parents’ occupations and grandparental involvement in these three preschools are expectedly affected, which discussed in Chapter 4.
In Figure 3.1, the research sites, A, B, and C, selected are located in an urban, a country, and a coastal area, respectively. These three public preschools, in different locations, were chosen in order to enrich the diversity of young participants’ backgrounds. The number of children and teachers, and the details of the teachers in the three preschools are specified in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1
Summary of the Three Public Preschools in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Preschools</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Names of Teachers</th>
<th>Teaching Years</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Urban</td>
<td></td>
<td>25 (F:11 M:14)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cindy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marie(^a)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Countryside</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 (F:13 M:17)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Anny</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Master (in progress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa(^b)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Coast</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 (F:16 M:14)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Betty</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Master (in progress)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. F means female; M means male.
\(^a\) Marie was a student teacher.
\(^b\) Lisa was an educare giver.

Table 3.1 summarizes the basic details of the three public preschools where data was collected. Urban Preschool, with seven classes, was affiliated with a prestigious public primary school in central Taichung. The classroom I observed consisted of 25 children aged 5-6. While the size of Urban Preschool was big, Countryside and Coast Preschool included one and two classes, respectively. The two classes in these two small preschools had the same number of children, and in addition they were mixed-age groups. The three classes I collected data from primarily had two qualified teachers, whereas the class in Urban Preschool also had one student teacher, and Countryside Preschool had one educare giver. Most of the preschool teachers had a Masters level degree in Early Childhood Education.

Although they are all public preschools under the ECECA in Taiwan, there are differences that need acknowledging for the purposes of this study. Each of the three classes had their unique contexts, pertaining to curriculum designs, classroom routines and physical learning environments, I have presented these separately in a brief introduction in the first finding chapter (Chapter 4) in order to extend a better understanding of the relationship between the context and my participants’ resilience stories.
3.4.2 Selection of research participants

While the three public preschools selected in Taiwan were convenience sampling, the recruitment of participant children was purposive. The focus of this study is on preschool children aged 5, who adjust to their life difficulties and achieve age-appropriate developmental tasks (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013); and the underlying assumption is that everyone has risk factors operating in their lives at any developmental stage (McWhirter et al., 2013). To guide the selection of the preschool participants, these were five selection criteria.

1. The research consent form has a signature from the child’s custodian.

2. Children confirm they want to participate in video recordings for this study by saying “Yes”, in Mandarin/Chinese or Taiwanese, to me.

3. Children have difficulties in language acquisition, attachment with primary caregivers, fundamental development of child movement, appropriate emotional expressions, or learning social skills as age-appropriate developmental tasks (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013) as discussed in Chapter 2.


5. Children’s backgrounds involved in potential risk factors shown in Table 2.1.

The first two conditions are mandatory, whereas the rest of the criteria are optional. As per the requirement of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research in 2007 in Australia and the Griffith University Human Research Committee, obtaining the children’s custodian’s consent was compulsory. With these criteria, there are nine participants recruited in this study and the basic details are summarized in Table 3.2.
### Table 3.2
Summary of Nine Preschool Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Potential Risk Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Preschool</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Howard</td>
<td>5 years 10 months</td>
<td>Emotional issues, single family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Emily</td>
<td>5 years 10 months</td>
<td>Grandmother’s death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Kelvin</td>
<td>5 years 7 months</td>
<td>Negative reaction after losing a competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Angel</td>
<td>5 years 6 months</td>
<td>Father’s death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countryside Preschool</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Grace</td>
<td>5 years 8 months</td>
<td>Unadjusted cultural differences between family and preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Timothy</td>
<td>5 years 9 months</td>
<td>Low learning motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Annabella</td>
<td>5 years 4 months</td>
<td>Deal with brother’s bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coast Preschool</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Victor</td>
<td>5 years 10 months</td>
<td>Asperger’s syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Ian</td>
<td>5 years 10 months</td>
<td>Fear of darkness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nine preschool children were all around the age of 5 when participating in this study. Their lived experiences involved diverse but individual risks, shown in Table 3.2. These risk factors led to the selection of the resilience-orientated stories.

Resilience-orientated stories refer to a diverse range of topics in stories to help the preschoolers in this study develop their resilience. In Chapter 2, teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories was reviewed as one of the age-appropriate interventions of promoting young children’s resilience (Berson & Baggerly, 2009). This is because teachers’ storytelling benefits children’s language, and social and emotional development (Daniel, 2012), and provides resilience role models for children to imitate (Crawford et al., 2004). With these advantages of storytelling, resilience can be taught by teachers’ storytelling. Furthermore, as a preschool teacher in Taiwan, it is common to see that teachers use storytelling as pedagogy, which is in line with literature (e.g. Daniel, 2012). As a result, resilience-orientated stories are purposefully used as an interventional tool.

There were two principles used to select the resilience-orientated stories. The first principle was based on life difficulties and potential risks the participants
encountered, as shown in Table 3.2, and my observations. The second principle was consultation with the teachers. This was not only because they were the storytellers who implemented the stories, but also because they had to consider the appropriateness of a story topic, such as the topic of death that might cause concern for parents. There were nine topics of resilience-orientated stories selected, including separation anxiety, sibling conflict, emotional issues, parent-child relationships, problem-solving skills, interpersonal relationships, self-assurance, positive thinking, and single-parent family and diverse family structures. The number of the stories used in Urban, Countryside, and Coast Preschool was 15, 10, and 13, respectively. The summaries of these stories are presented in Appendix M, O, and Q.

Although there was data gathered from nine participants, this study reports on five resilience stories. Although the selection of the five stories was all boys, highlighted in Table 3.2, it did not involve an interpretation of a gender issue. This is because the main reason for selecting these stories is to achieve the research purpose and the two Research Objectives. These resilience stories held the greatest potential to offer new insights into the role that Taiwanese social and cultural contexts played in children’s resilience development. In turn these stories would provide a generative basis from which to address both RO1 and RO2, and the gap in resilience research between the non-Western and the Western literature. The other four stories were presented in Appendix R and in other publications (see page iv).

3.4.3 Research procedure in multiple methods of data collection

This study outlined the selection of participant children in three Taiwanese public preschools in the previous section. In this section, the procedure of data collection was integrated with what research actions I took in the three classrooms of the preschools over one semester and explicitly illustrated in Figure 3.2. There were four major phases where the research actions progressed differently. This also led to utilizing multiple methods of gathering data. For example, first week of data collection was preparation so my field notes recorded initial interactions and conversations with teachers. The main focus of the second phase was to establish a trust relationship with preschoolers and teachers, as well as to choose participant children and resilience-orientated stories. Therefore, children’s classroom observations with interviews began.
After that, while the children’s observations remained in the classrooms, teachers’ interviews added regarding teachers’ observations of the participant children and the perception of the resilience-orientated stories. In this third phase, children’s narratives of resilience as the focus of RO1 should be gathered but teachers and parents’ interviews could provide extra examples of the children’s lived experiences in relation to influential elements and interactions on resilience development as the focus of RO2. The last phase was after a semester, and therefore it did not involve with the children observations. The intention of this phase was to have formal interviews with teachers and participant children’s parents.
My Research Actions

1. Contact three preschools
2. Gain research consent from the three preschool gate keepers, teachers and children’s custodian
3. Negotiate dates of data collection

1. Access to two preschools and build a good relationship with teachers and children
2. Observe and choose research participants
3. Discuss the most appropriate story books with teachers based on the situations of participant children’s life difficulties
4. Interview teachers about the perception of their storytelling if necessary
5. Change or add resilience-orientated stories if necessary

1. Participate in classroom activities with children
2. Observe children’s behaviours and interview them
3. Observe teachers’ resilience-orientated storytelling
4. Interview teachers about the perception of their storytelling if necessary
5. Change or add resilience-orientated stories if necessary

1. Interview parents regarding my observations of their children
2. Interview teachers regarding my observations of their children and the use of the stories

Types of Data Collection

1. Field notes

1. Classroom observations
2. Children interviews
3. Children’s documents
4. Teachers’ informal interviews
5. Field notes

1. Classroom observations
2. Children interviews
3. Teachers’ interviews
4. Children’s documents
5. Parents’ interviews
6. Field notes

1. Teachers’ interviews
2. Parents’ interviews

Figure 3.2 Research Process of Data Collection
Table 3.3 illustrates the timetables of my fieldwork in the three preschools. Preparation consisted of recruiting public preschools to be research sites, gaining public preschool gatekeepers’ and teachers’ approval, and obtaining parents’ consent, which was outlined in Figure 3.2a as well. The details of classroom observations in the three preschools are shown in Appendix E, comprising the observation dates and times, and the use of the stories in each preschool. While classroom observation dates and times were different, the numbers of the classroom-observation hours were approximately 133 in Urban Preschool, 103 in Countryside Preschool, and 95 in Coast Preschool.

### Table 3.3
Timetables for Data Collection in the Three Preschools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data / Periods</th>
<th>A Preschool</th>
<th>B Preschool</th>
<th>C Preschool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers’ Interviews</strong></td>
<td>Informal: Anytime during my observations</td>
<td>Informal: Anytime during my observations</td>
<td>Informal: Anytime during my observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal: On average twice for each preschool teacher</td>
<td>Formal: On average twice for each preschool teacher</td>
<td>Formal: On average twice for each preschool teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Interviews</strong></td>
<td>Informal: When parents picked up their children at preschools</td>
<td>Informal: When parents picked up their children at preschools</td>
<td>Informal: When parents picked up their children at preschools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal: At least once per participant with the mother</td>
<td>Formal: At least once per participant with the mother</td>
<td>Formal: At least once per participant with the mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children’s Documents</strong></td>
<td>Anytime when I was in classrooms</td>
<td>Anytime when I was in classrooms</td>
<td>Anytime when I was in classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Field Notes</strong></td>
<td>Anytime but mainly after daily observations</td>
<td>Anytime but mainly after daily observations</td>
<td>Anytime but mainly after daily observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides classroom observations undertaken in different dates, Table 3.3 shows teachers’ and parents’ interviews all involved with informal and formal ones. Both informal interviews were completed in accordance with individual circumstances, but all interviews were digitally documented. Children’s documents were copied after I participated in classroom activities. My research filed notes were primary written during napping time and after preschool. These five methods of data collection were elaborated as below.

**Observations by video recordings**

Observing is the principle method of data collection in this study for three reasons. Firstly, one of the processes of collecting firsthand data from research participants and sites is through direct observations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2008, 2012; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2011; Gold, 1958; Yin, 2009). Therefore,
classroom observations record preschool children’s behaviours during learning and demonstrations of resilience, and their experience of listening to the resilience-orientated stories and narrating their own stories. Secondly, the most important benefits of direct observation are to study authentic behaviours of the participants and their body language in an interactive environment (Creswell, 2012; Gold, 1958; Yin, 2009). This is because a direct observation can also see the children’s body language that complements their oral language. Thirdly, it allows a deeper understanding of the culture of the children being studied, which is vital to my research purpose, as well as direct participation in their preschool life as necessary (Gold, 1958; Takyi, 2015).

The instruments used to assist the classroom observations were a video recorder, voice recorder and my descriptive field notes. Table 3.4 illustrates the venues where these three instruments were used and the focus of the recordings.

Table 3.4
Summary of Observational Venues and Focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Recording Venues</th>
<th>Focuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video recordings</td>
<td>Indoor classrooms</td>
<td>Children’s behaviours: Storytelling, reading, playing, interacting with others, and listening to teachers’ storytelling and engaging in learning activities. Children’s narratives: Retelling the stories, making up own narratives, and responding to teachers’ questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reading centres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Role-play centres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Group discussion areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice recordings</td>
<td>Outdoor playgrounds</td>
<td>Children’s narratives: Peer’s conversations, social interactions Children’s interviews Teachers’ informal interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research field notes (handwritten)</td>
<td>Both classrooms and playgrounds</td>
<td>All of the above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three recording techniques were used for the following reasons. Video recordings were employed in classroom contexts only to capture the children’s behaviours and narratives within their social contexts. They were taken in the reading centre, role-play centre and group discussion area in each preschool at storytelling time.
and free time for exploration. The quality of video recording in the playground was poor and proved ineffective so was not used in that location. A voice recorder proved to be the most effective and convenient method for capturing outdoor activities. I could easily self-record my observations by reporting what I saw with regard to the children’s interactions, play, and my conversations with participant children and teachers. Although handwritten field notes are not direct recordings, it was necessary to resort to using this technique to capture observations of the children as an ancillary method whenever there were technical difficulties with the video or voice recorders.
Interviewing is an invaluable strategy in narrative research (Riessman, 1993, 2008). While classroom observations were my major data source, interviews provided various perspectives to enrich the content of young children’s narratives of resilience, and to reduce the subjectivity of my interpretations in children’s narratives. There are three interview subjects, not only the research participants, but also their teachers and parents/caregivers. The examples of interview questions for participant children, their parents and teachers are outlined in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5
Summary of Three Types of Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Interview Venues/Types</th>
<th>Examples of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Preschools - Telephone interviews - Emails</td>
<td>- Informal interviews were to immediately clarify questions I had from classroom observations. I asked about them when they were free to talk. - Formal interviews utilized semi-structured questions shown in Appendix F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Preschools - Telephone interviews</td>
<td>- Informal interviews took place when parents picked up their children. Questions were mostly related to their family lives. - Formal interviews utilized semi-structured questions shown in Appendix G.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children’s interviews were undertaken in groups rather than on a one-to-one basis. To interview young children successfully, participating in their world is essential (Kyronlampi-Kylmanen & Maatta, 2011). Accordingly, I participated with the children during their activities in the role-play and reading centres, and teachers’ storytelling in the group discussion area. At each preschool visited, I interviewed the children while I observed them. In this study, the benefits of using this type of group interview technique were it was less disruptive to the classroom routine and provided a more normal and familiar environment for the children. For instance, participant children reacted authentically when narrating their stories in a group of their peers where there was often pertinent interactive and reinforcing feedback, as opposed to a monologue performed in an interview setting.

For the teachers’ formal interviews, there were a few interview intentions; namely, providing their perspectives of participant children in terms of the resilience development, expressing their reflection on the pedagogy of teachers’ storytelling, and suggesting resilience-orientated stories that might help children’s resilience development. The examples of two semi-structured interview questions applied to the seven teachers in the three public preschools can be found in Appendix F.1 and Appendix F.2. The purpose of teachers’ informal interviews was to quickly resolve questions arising during classroom observations and alternate independent sources of participant children’s narratives outside of the classroom. As preschool teachers’ perspectives on participant children’s narrative in relation to resilience were considered as a second opinion, it improved the validation of my interpretation.

Regarding the parents’ interviews, informal interviews occurred during my observation at the three preschools, whereas formal interviews were undertaken after classroom observations. Initially, informal interviews involved answering the parents’ concerns about their child being a participant in this research, asking about participant children’s lived experiences at home, clarifying parents’ feedback on the worksheets after the resilience-orientated stories had been told, and sharing my classroom observations of participant children. The informal interviews took place in two particular periods of time. One was in the morning when parents brought their children to preschool, but at this time most of the parents were in a hurry and would rush off to
work. The other opportunity for informal interviews arose after preschool when the parents picked up their children. I also took advantage of the school sports day\(^5\) to interview parents as most of them came to see their children compete.

Additionally, after the completion of children’s data collection during their classes, I provided observational and interview transcripts and initial interpretation reports to each parent of participant children. Regarding the report, the purposes of formal interviews were to obtain the parents’ confirmation of the report, and to record their opinions in terms of their parenting styles, their expectations for their child, and family lived experiences. Through understanding the interactions between parents and their children in their family lived experience, parents’ interviews provided children’s experienced developmental difficulties and/or traumas the family have gone through. These lived experiences at home may not be observed at preschools. Therefore, parent’s data was important to indicate the influential elements on children’s resilience development in family contexts, which was the exploration of RO2. Furthermore, discussing observation reports of participant children with the parents also contributed to the validation of my interpretation of children’s resilience narratives. For the convenience purposes of the parents, these formal interviews were conducted individually by telephone and emails. The semi-structured interview questions are shown in Appendix G.

**Participants’ documents**

Documents are a common source of qualitative data (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2008, 2012; Gay et al., 2011). Documents in this study refer to different sources, such as parent-teacher contact books, participant children’s reports assessed by teachers, and the children’s portfolios containing their drawings, paintings, and working sheets in each preschool. The paramount intention of collecting young participants’ documents is to enrich the expression of their narratives. Table 3.6 details the content of children’s documents and the times I gathered the data.

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\(^5\) Public preschools in Taiwan are mostly affiliated to public primary schools. The sports day takes place once a year, which is usually around October or November. It is a big event in schools so parents are invited to join.
Table 3.6
Summary of Collecting Children’s Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Collecting Contents</th>
<th>Collecting Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent-teacher contact</td>
<td>- Diagnostic reports</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books</td>
<td>- Low-income certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- children’s anecdotal reports at home and preschool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s assessments</td>
<td>- Children’s learning reports in each thematic curriculum</td>
<td>End of each thematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s portfolios</td>
<td>- Drawing or painting</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Worksheets</td>
<td>observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact books were a medium for parents and teachers to communicate on a weekly basis. Teachers generally reported children’s anecdotal events, reminders of children’s learning preparation for the next week, and information on any of the preschool’s general events. Parents might reply to teachers’ reports, share their weekend activities and remind teachers of children’s needs, especially health issues. This contact book was not only the major interconnecting tool for both, but it also contained important information in terms of the children’s medical diagnostic reports and low-income certificates. Such documents extended an opportunity to understand participant children’s potential risk and protective factors with regard to the development of their resilience.

Children’s assessments specified the outcome of children’s learning in the three public preschools in Taiwan. Based on the purpose of each thematic curriculum, preschool teachers assessed preschoolers’ performance in different learning domains, such as their gross and fine motor skills, social interaction skills, literacy, numeracy, and specific knowledge they learnt in the thematic curriculum. This document also enabled me to evaluate participating children’s potential risk and protective factors with regards to their resilience development. In Urban and Countryside Preschools only one theme was covered during the period of the data collection; thus only one assessment was collected for each participant child at these two preschools. At Coast Preschool four themes were taught during the five month data collection period so there were four assessments for each participant child.
The children’s portfolios encompassed their work at preschool. When observing in each classroom, I gathered two types of documents drawings and paintings, and worksheets. Firstly, drawings and paintings featured frequently in preschool curriculum and in children’s free time for exploration. Brooker (2001) suggested that utilizing children’s drawings with interviews facilitated the capture of lived experiences. As a result, to elicit participating children’s narratives I asked questions based on the subject of their drawings. For example, when they drew a picture titled ‘My Family’, I used the picture as a basis for the interview to ask them individually “Tell me more about your family and your picture. Who is this person in your picture? What are they doing?”

Secondly, worksheets had various functions at preschool. This study collected two kinds of worksheets. One was the children’s reading reports, which were their homework for the weekend. The three preschools each had parent-child reading activities. Children borrowed a storybook and took it home on Friday, so parents could read the storybook and to the children on the weekend. Parents were also encouraged to help children draw their feelings or thoughts after hearing the story. The other worksheet I designed myself to relate to the content of the resilience-orientated stories. After engaging in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions, children could draw their thoughts on the stories, or solutions to the problems provided in the stories, on their worksheets. These two types of worksheets can be found in Appendix H.1 and H.2.

**Research field notes**

Research field notes are used by researchers to record their personal thoughts, feelings, reflections, and even inspirations gained from their research sites (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2008, 2012; Gay et al., 2011). My field notes were collected by handwriting and voice recordings, and included the reflections on the observation days at preschool. However, the field notes also reported my observations if the digital video recorder failed as aforementioned. Recording the research diary afforded an opportunity to reflect on my researcher’s role, and on the influence of that role in the three preschool settings. Apart from my reflections, I also wrote down inquiries regarding classroom observations and participating children’s family lives. To clarify my questions, the field notes became the source from which the parent’s and teachers’ interview questions were derived.
3.4.4 Diverse researcher’s roles

As a preschool teacher with six years of experience working in public and private kindergartens, and as a researcher with three years of experience researching in the field of early childhood education, I was viewed as an insider by preschool teachers in Taiwan. The benefits of being an insider in this research included greater understanding of the social context in Taiwanese public preschools, more human resources to recruit as research sites, and it was easier to build a trusting research-participant rapport. There were however, some drawbacks as a result of being an insider. Gold (1958) stated that “the field worker (researcher) is often defined by informants (participant) as more of a colleague than he feels capable of being” (p.221). In this study, the relationships with some preschool teachers became too close, such that I was viewed as a consultant who would be able to help provide solutions to problems they had with teachers’ cooperation, parents’ arguments, and even teachers’ personal lives. Hence, writing my reflection diary in my field notes was important in maintaining a respectful and professional research relationship.

As a narrative researcher, I was not an outsider of preschool classrooms. In order to acquire someone’s lived experience, embracing the interaction between participants and researchers is part of the role of narrative inquirers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000). My role changed over time. For example, when initially entering the three preschool classes in the period of the preparation, I was an “observer-as-participant” (Gold, 1958, p. 221) in order to identify the participants. By contrast, as the length of contact time increased, my role changed to a “participant-as-observer” (Gold, 1958, p. 220), allowing the children in the three preschools to feel comfortable enough to talk to me.

Additionally, I participated in the children’s activities in the three preschools and built a secure and encouraging relationship with children in order to reassure them so they could talk freely, and in turn, acquire more children’s narratives. For this reason, I confirmed with the preschool teachers that when I was in the classroom collecting data, I was not there in the role of a teacher. Although all the preschool children referred to me as a teacher, as time passed, they understood that I was not an “educative” teacher.
This became clear to them when the children had conflicts or arguments, as I did not act as mediator or guide them authoritatively.

Conversely, from the teachers’ perspectives, I was a “complete participant” (Gold, 1958, p. 219) for the following reasons. Initially, this is because, as a researcher, I sometimes joined the teachers’ meetings regarding how to use pedagogy of storytelling and what kind of questions they could use to inspire children in story discussions. In addition, my role was as a knowledge provider and experience sharer in terms of resilience if they had queries about that subject. Third, the role of a complete participant enables a better understanding of the research context (Gold, 1958; Takyi, 2015). Gold (1958) warns that researchers may “go native” (p. 220) and lose their perspective of objective criticism. As the focus of this study was not on preschool teachers, it was possible to minimize this issue. Furthermore, because some teachers in this study were my previous colleagues, and six of them either had Masters Degrees or were studying for one, most of them were familiar with the researcher-researched relationship. As a result, my rapport with the teachers was cooperative and professional.

In summary, to capture participating children’s narrative and resilience learning through teachers’ storytelling, and to understand the influence of environmental contexts on children’s resilience, multiple methods of data collection were employed in this study. While classroom observations and interviews involving participant children’s interviews were the primary sources of data, the perspectives of the parents and teachers complemented the children’s narratives of resilience.

3.5 Narrative Analysis

As multiple data were gathered classroom observations, interviews, children’s documents and my research field notes, interpreting and analyzing also began as the process of data analysis in qualitative research is not linear (Creswell, 2012). In this study, the method of narrative analysis was multiple and overlapping (Riessman, 1993, 2008). There are many methods to analyse narrative data, however the method chosen should rely on the researchers’ disciplines, theoretical perspectives, methodologies, and research purposes (Riessman, 2008). For example, in a narrative study conducted by Puroila et al. (2012a), Riessman’s dialogic analysis was applied to analyse children’s
everyday narratives. Although Puroila et al. (2012a, p. 196) did not show the process of their analysis in details, the four characteristics of children’s narratives were identified as “fragmentariness, multimodality, collaboration, and a complex relationship between the narrative and the context.” Puroila et al. (2012a) elaborated multimodality as children’s multiple methods of expressing their narratives and making their meanings to others, such as body language, facial expressions, linguistic means, and art products. The idea of multimodality was employed in narrative research of preschool-age children, such as Binder’s study (2017). To understand children’s complex lived experiences, Binder’s narrative study (2017) collected the authentic nature of preschoolers’ voices, including telling, acting, and drawing, and analysed these multimodal narrative forms. Consistent with Puroila et al. (2012a) and Binder (2017), children’s classroom observations with interviews as main research data in this study was collected in order to explore young children’s lived experience of resilience. It is expected that some findings of this study might be congruent with the literature. With these considerations in mind, Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis was implemented in this study.

In this section, there are four important components. Firstly, the rationale of Riessman’s analysis is discussed. Secondly, the two phases of the data analysis, including the use of three coding strategies, the process of developing two analytical frameworks for the two Research Objectives, narratives of resilience and sources of resilience incorporated with BEST, are elaborated. Additionally, the benefits of being a bilingual researcher and the challenges of language translations in research are outlined. Lastly, the presentation of the research findings in this study is delineated.

3.5.1 Dialogic/performance analysis

Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis (2008) has been theoretically influenced by the concept of narrative methodology developed from Bruner, Clandinin, and Connelly, etc. As in the 3.3 section (Methodology: Narrative Approach) justified, a narrative approach is an appropriate methodology to explore children’s lived experiences in this study. The method of Riessman’s narrative analysis was selected to practice the narrative approach, and was developed to understand children’s personal experiences, pertaining their interactions and contexts. With multiple data gathered as
described in the previous section, Riessman’s analysis particularly applies to the reading and understanding of contexts, “including the influence of investigator, setting, and social circumstances on the production and interpretation of narrative” (p. 105), which guide Research Objectives in this study. This analysis method therefore was employed in exploring participant children’s lived experiences in relation to resilience in the context of the three Taiwanese public preschools. Compared with Riessman’s other analytic methods, shown in Table 3.7, the features of the dialogic/performance analysis are more appropriately applied in young children’s narrative analysis for the following reasons.

**Table 3.7**
Summary of Three Narrative Analysis Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches</th>
<th>Features/Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Analysis</td>
<td>1. Focus on ‘what content is told’</td>
<td>1. Rely on the content of speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Applied to interview data, group meetings, written documents</td>
<td>2. Less attention on interviewers/researchers and contexts, where the data is collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Maintains a story intact for the purpose of interpretation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Emphasis on sequences and plots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
<td>1. Focus on content and ‘how it is structured’</td>
<td>1. Lack of social contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Allows for combining with other analyses</td>
<td>2. Difficult to apply to large samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Includes different functions of each individual clause, such as abstract, orientation, complicating action, and resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogic/Performance Analysis</td>
<td>1. Focus on contexts and ‘whose voice exists in the content’</td>
<td>1. Difficult to apply to large samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The narrative is multivoiced and researchers/interviewers actively participate in the text</td>
<td>2. Multiple voices (interviewees, interviewers’ reflection and analysis) may confuse readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Allows for combining with other analyses</td>
<td>3. Little attention to the structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Applied to interview data, group meetings, and various data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The content of this table is organized and developed from Riessman’s book, “*Narrative methods for the human sciences*” in 2008.

The initial reason is the implementation of multiple voices, which is congruent with the approach of using the multiple methods of data collection. In the research
findings presented, these included my active interpretive voice, participating children’s voices, parents’ and even teachers’ voices. Accordingly, the findings increase credibility and allow readers to enter the narrated plot and moment (Riessman, 2008). Furthermore, the dialogic/performance analysis highlights that children’s gestures, expressive sounds, body language, facial expressions, direct speech, interruptions, non-verbal communication, pausing and hesitation during talking, and movements are meaningful ‘performance’ forms in their narratives (Riessman, 2008), which is consistent with the concept of multimodality in children’s narratives (Puroila et al., 2012a). As a result, multiple voices not only include my participant children’s voices, the voices from their interactions with peers, teachers and parents, and my interactive and interpreting voices, but also children’s drawings representing another form of their voices. In this study, preschool children’s interviews were embedded in classroom observations in groups rather than individual meetings, and frequent use was made of these multiple narrative expressions as part of their narratives of resilience.

The second reason is that the thick description of the research context is emphasized by the dialogic/performance analysis. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that “time and place, plot and scene, work together to create the experiential quality of narrative” (p. 8). More specifically, the scene refers to “a place where the action occurs, where characters are formed and live out their stories and where cultural and social context play constraining and enabling roles” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 8). The scene is embedded in a context. The main feature of the dialogic/performance analysis is to deliberately describe research contexts in comparison with the thematic and structural analyses (Riessman, 2008). This study was conducted in the three public preschools in Taiwan, where the culture and society are different from that described in literature in the Western culture. This analytical approach, integrating the thick description of the research context, emphasizes the unique research settings and participants’ narratives.

The third reason is because the dialogic/performance analysis can combine with another analytical framework. RO2 in this study is to explore some of the influential elements and interactions on the development of children’s resilience through the lens of BEST. As a result, BEST was integrated with the dialogic/performance analysis as a
theoretically thematic framework in order to identify the influential elements and interactions between preschoolers and the elements embedded in Taiwanese social and cultural contexts in their narratives.

These rationales for adopting Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis are the foundation for developing an analytical framework for RO1, and provide the possibility integrating with BEST for analysing RO2. These are outlined in the next section.

3.5.2 Process of analysis

Riessman’s dialogic/performance narrative analysis guided each participant child’s story around themes fundamentally related to the development of a child’s resilience, and was guided by BEST to reveal influential elements and interactions on the development of children’s resilience. These are vital to the two Research Objectives. In order to explore preschoolers’ lived experiences in relation to the development of their resilience, during the process of my data collection, initially I analysed an individual’s data independently, including his classroom observations, interviews, documents and my reflection of his report, and then respectively developed a narrative analytical framework and theoretically thematic analysis framework in accordance with RO1 and RO2 in this study.

The texts of multiple data, such as children’s classroom observations with interviews, and teachers and parents’ interviews, were transcribed for further analysis whereas children’s documents and field notes were categorized as an individual field of each participant. This was because the former data involved transcribing digital data into texts. Figure 3.3 shows the general process of the data analysis in this study. This diagram indicates three key points. Firstly, data analysis started during the late data collection, and the transcribing process as a qualitative data analysis are not linear (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, the relationship between the processes of data collection and transcriptions and the initial data analysis phase is reciprocal. When transcribing digital data into texts, the method of initial coding developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) began, which elaborated later in the initial data analysis phase. Secondly, the analysis essentially can be divided into two phases, such as coding in the initial phase, and developing the two frameworks in the specific phase. Despite the distinction
between the two phases, the analysis was manually interwoven. Frequently, I had to refer back to the original data, codes, categories and themes. Thirdly, Figure 3.3 demonstrates that the two analytical frameworks respectively lead to the findings that represent the results of the explorations of RO1 and RO2.

Initial data analysis phase

In this initial phase of data analysis, I adopted several principles in the preparation of data for analysis, as suggested by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) and Josselson (2011). In this first phase, I have used several steps according to these principles, such as organizing data, applying three coding strategies, understanding relationships between codes, and ensuring children’s voices remained central to the narratives produced.

1. Organizing data. To explore each preschooler’s lived experience in terms of resilience each of the participants had a specific data file comprising of the five types of data; classroom observations, group interviews, parents’ and teachers’ interviews, documents, and my field notes. I also employed NVivo 6 software to organize each young participant’s data file.

2. Reading and three coding strategies. This study applied three coding strategies to deepen data analysis. In essence, coding is used not just to label the data, but also to have a linkage, meaning that “it leads you from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea” (Richards & Morse, 2013, p. 154). Coding is not only “a heuristic” but also “a method” to organize and assemble similar features of coded data in the same categories (Saldaña, 2009, p. 8). A code can be either a word or a short phrase.

The decision regarding coding strategies was grounded in the literature review of resilience, BEST, storytelling and narrative, and the two Research Objectives. I developed hybrid coding methods pertaining to initial coding, process coding, and narrative coding. First, initial coding, or opening coding, refers to “breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for

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6 The name of a software for qualitative data analysis. In this study, I did use it to organize the data but not analysis.
similarities and differences” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 102). As this study sought to explore the participant children’s influential elements on the development of resilience, initial coding identified both the elements and general information, such as children’s behaviours, social interactions and learning activities.

Secondly, process coding occurs simultaneously with initial coding and examines ongoing actions, consequences of actions and social interactions, and emotion (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2009). The focus of process coding in this study was interactions and relationships that participant children mentioned in their narratives, and their responses to teachers’ storytelling and story discussions.

The last strategy was narrative coding, which was incorporated with narrative methodology in this study. As narrative coding is used to explore “intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions to understand the human condition through story” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 109), narrative coding recoded children’s lived experiences, special reactions to resilience stories, and unique social contexts. The narrative coding strategy of this study helped to advance integration with BEST.

These three essential coding strategies employed in this study were partially overlapped in order to correspond to the two Research Objectives in this study. This is possible because Saldaña (2009) emphasizes that all the coding methods “can be compatibly mixed” (p. 51). The aforementioned coding strategies were primarily applied to the four types of data; namely, classroom observations, my field notes, interviews, and children’s documents. Children’s drawings were an important data source in this study as their drawings were evidence of how they projected their feelings, emotions and thoughts (Eng, 1954; Thomas & Silk, 1990), and of making meaning (Einarsdottir, Dockett, & Perry, 2009) in children’s resilience learning journey. As such, the drawing should be regarded as an important writing narrative provided by the preschoolers. In this study, writing narratives which made up the majority of children’s documents, were coded and analysed together with their verbal narratives. This is because frequently the children’s drawings and narratives occurred concurrently, and sometimes I used a tell-and-draw interview strategy to facilitate their verbal narratives. The example of the three coding strategies applied to a classroom observation has been presented in Appendix I.
3. **Reviewing the codes to look for relationships.** After coding, I reread all the codes for each participant in the created categories and attempted to identify potential themes associated with participant children’s resilience stories. To do so, I analysed the relationships between the codes, resilience, BEST and the two Research Objectives.

4. **Voices.** There are multiple voices involved in each child’s resilience story. As I adopted an active interpretive role in the context of the multiple voices implemented, I could not avoid the influence of my subjectivity in the way each resilience stories have been constructed and reconstructed (Riessman, 2008). However, my voice did not dominate the children’s resilience stories as the implementation of multiple voices in the dialogic/performance analysis crosscheck for contradictions in the four types of main data during the second phase of data analysis.

5. **Validation.** In this phase, an initial transcript of a child’s story was given to their parents to assure the accuracy of their interviews, and to reflect their opinions on the content of their child’s classroom observations and interviews. Then, I had the last individual formal interview with each participant’s mother, which was reported in the previous section as multiple methods of data collection.
Figure 3.3 Data analytical process

Developed from “Qualitative data management and analysis process” (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 293).
Second specific phase: Narrative analytical framework and thematic analysis incorporated with BEST

According to the two Research Objectives, the second phase of the analytical process in Figure 3.3 is divided into two sections. RO1 is to explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling and engage in story discussions. An analytical framework in Table 3.8 was adopted from Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis (1993, 2008) and the concept of Clandinin and Connelly’s narrative inquiry (2000), and developed by the researcher in order to identify themes from the codes and categories, and to focus on each storyline in relation to the development of child’s resilience. Although Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis provides a few examples of narrative research as analytical guidance, it is necessary to consider my participant children’s narratives that were generated in a natural setting not only differently from an adult-orientated form, but also in distinct research contexts. Moreover, to focus my interpretation on preschoolers’ narratives of resilience, this analytical framework, based on Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis, provided guidance.

Table 3.8
Narrative Analytical Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who originates narratives in relation to resilience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Who” question responds to the concern of the dialogic/performance analysis (Riessman, 2008).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are multivoices presented in a participant child’s narratives?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Multiple voices involved in narrative research is an important feature in dialogic/performance analysis (Riessman, 2008) and also corresponds to this research context where the participant children’s narratives generated not only differently from an adult-orientated form but also in a natural setting basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What lived experiences does the participant child have in relation to his/her resilience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• This question is guided by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) who conceptualized narrative inquiry as the most appropriate method of understanding human experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How does the participant child interact with his/her peers, resilience-orientated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### stories, teachers and me?
- This question is embedded in both Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Riessman (2008) in terms of the interaction between the researcher and research participants. Further, Riessman (2008, p. 105) examines “interactional, historical, institutional, and discursive” contexts.

### How does the participant child make meaning of resilience-orientated stories?
- It is important for narrative inquirers to look for meaning for the participants and to construct and reconstruct narrative meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 1993, 2008).

### How do I directly and indirectly influence the child’s narrative?
- It is necessary for a narrative researcher to discuss his/her subjectivity, which influences both the interactional context and interpretive analysis (Riessman, 1993, 2008).

With respect to RO2, exploring influential elements and interactions between preschoolers and the elements embedded in their ecologies, and their effect on the development of their resilience was analysed through the lens of BEST. In the second phase of data analysis, BEST was used not only as a theoretical framework (Figure 2.2) but also as a basis for a theoretically thematic framework. This theoretically thematic framework was developed by integrating BEST with the concept of resilience to analyze children’s influential elements and the interactions within their narratives. Consequently, the focus of the analysis during this phase was convergence of the codes related to microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems as theoretical themes, and as related to resilience literatures as reviewed in Chapter 2. Table 3.9 is an analytical table of the theoretically thematic framework used for each participant child in order to systematically identify influential elements and interactions. An example of using this analytical table with my participants is presented in Appendix J.
Table 3.9
*An Analytical Table of a Theoretically Thematic Framework*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEST</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Potential Risks</th>
<th>Positive Influences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Microsystem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesosystem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exosystem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrosystem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronosystems (Micro-time, Meso-time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.5.3 Translation of texts

Language is essential in the majority of research applying the qualitative approach (Inhetveen, 2012; Riessman, 2008; Temple & Young, 2004). The awareness of equivalent language translation in social science research has increased due to the growing number of cross-cultural studies. Most researchers encounter similar dilemmas in terms of meaning equivalence (Brislin, 1970; Inhetveen, 2012; Lopez, Figueroa, Connor, & Maliski, 2008; Temple & Young, 2004). Although this study is not cross-cultural research, it has been conducted in a non-English speaking country. All data corpus was in Taiwanese and Mandarin, including the research information sheet and consent form (Appendix C and D). As a consequence, the issue of language translation should be acknowledged in this section.

In terms of a language translation issue in research, there were benefits and challenges to be considered as a bilingual researcher. The benefit of being a researcher and also a translator is to offer “the researcher significant opportunities for close attention to cross-cultural meanings and interpretations and potentially brings the researcher up close to the problems of meaning equivalence within the research process” (Temple & Young, 2004, p. 168). I am fluent in both Taiwanese, my mother tongue, and Mandarin/Chinese, the official language in Taiwan is. Consequently, when children in the three preschools talked to me both in Taiwanese and Mandarin, the conversations and communication between us did not have any barrier. When I transcribed the data, the verbatim transcription was in Chinese, an example is shown in Appendix I.
Additionally, because I am a bilingual researcher, this study provides a perspective of Taiwanese social and cultural contexts to the Western dominant literature on resilience. Thus, the benefit of being bilingual in this regard is to enrich the literature.

A great number of cross-cultural researchers experience translation dilemmas in reporting the equivalent meaning of phrases, sentences or paragraphs and verbatim (Inhetveen, 2012; Lopez et al., 2008; Riessman, 2008; Temple & Young, 2004). Consistent with this study, it is difficult for professional translators to translate accurately without any compromise between contextual meaning and literal translation of the research participants’ responses (Lopez et al., 2008; Riessman, 2008). When I translated some extracts from Chinese to English, I also had similar challenges. To diminish the gap, this study adopted the technique of “contextual translations” developed by Lopez et al. (2008), which is “when a direct translation did not convey the intended meaning within the context of the conversation, the contextual translation was included in parentheses for clarification” (p. 1734) As a result, I utilized this technique both in transcriptions and extracts of evident examples from the data as contextual explanations, and children’s non-verbal expressions in order to support the intended meaning.

Another challenge I encountered is that there was not always an equivalent word or term in English when translating from Chinese. Take Ian’s case for instance; there was a “Gods’ room” in Ian’s home where his grandmother regularly prayed twice a day. I could not find an accurate equivalent term to describe the name of the room in English. If I used the term in Chinese however, “Shen Ming Ting”, there would be comprehension difficulties without some sort of equivalent meaning in English. To resolve this practical translation challenge, not only contextual translations, but also the provision of new definitions and photos was utilised.

Moreover, the main concern of being a researcher as a translator is the validity of translations (Lopez et al., 2008; Temple & Young, 2004). In this regard, Brislin (1970) provided several principles to check if a translation is adequate. This study, implemented a few of the principles Brislin suggested (1970) to assure valid translation, shown in Figure 3.4.
In Figure 3.4, there were several steps to ensure translation quality and equivalence. Initially, the four types of raw data were transcribed in Chinese, whereas I used the technique of the contextual translation as aforementioned when children spoke in Taiwanese. Secondly, I coded the data in one participant child’s story in English first (Appendix I). The same data was then coded in Chinese as well, in order to compare the codes in the two languages. This showed there was no difference between the texts. As a result, the rest of the data was coded in English only. Similarly, data analysis was conducted in English only.
Moreover, the last step involved a back translation process as indicated in Figure 3.4. As I did not translate all the Chinese transcriptions into English, when I selected some extracts as evidence to support participant children’s narratives of resilience in the finding chapters, the language translation was performed. I translated some extracts of interviews, classroom observations and field notes in one participant child’s story to English. I then invited a Taiwanese-English bilingual academic\textsuperscript{7} to translate these extracts back to Chinese. This process was applied to examine the reliability and validity of translated extracts (Brislin, 1970). Furthermore, to enhance the validity of the translation, I consulted two native speakers\textsuperscript{8} to proofread the particular child’s story I translated. They provided useful feedback after reading the extracts (Appendix K). I modified a few phrases or redefined terms in accordance with both opinions. After that, I edited in accordance with my supervisors’ comments.

3.5.4 Constructing and presenting narrative texts

The application of Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis allowed me to present each resilience story with multiple voices (Riessman, 2008), pertaining to participant children’s individual voices, their parents and preschool teachers’ voices, and my interpretive voice. Riessman’s analysis and BEST as a theoretical framework provided guidance in constructing participant preschoolers’ stories in relation to their lived experiences of resilience in order to fulfil the two Research Objectives. According to the data analytic process in Figure 3.3, there are two finding chapters to address these purposes; namely, narratives of resilience in Chapter 4 and sources of resilience incorporated with BEST in Chapter 5.

3.6 Trustworthiness

In this study, validation refers to trustworthiness of the interpretation that can be examined in a narrative study rather than the consideration of reliability and validity based on quantitative criteria (Riessman, 1993, 2008). Polkinghorne (2007) further pointed out that the validity of the qualitative research as narrative research should be evaluated in a different way from quantitative research, such as plausibility,

\textsuperscript{7} The bilingual was a retired Professor in Early Childhood Education.
\textsuperscript{8} They were retired English teachers.
Credibility, and trustworthiness. Therefore, trustworthiness in this study is regarded as validity that “relates to personal meaning drawn from the narrative stories, not to measurable truth” (Garvis, Ødegaard, & Lemon, 2015, p. 11). The following components, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), have also been considered.

Credibility, dependability and confirmability are considered in this study. As the importance of credibility is to ensure internal validity of research, a few strategies were applied in this study, such as: persistently observing the participants; engaging in the three public preschools in Taiwan over five months (one semester) as the research context; and using the multiple methods of data collection as triangulation data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in order to enhance credibility of the interpretations and findings of this study. Furthermore, these strategies also increase the probability of dependability of this study as an auditor is likely to ascertain that the research is dependable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The crucial factor in improving the dependability of this study was the involvement of my three supervisors, who ensured that the outcome of my data collection, interpretation and analysis did actually represent the participant preschoolers’ lived experiences in the three Taiwanese public preschools. Lastly, to affirm the confirmable findings of this study as a qualitative research is a challenge because a researcher as a research instrument inevitably contains some extent of subjectivity. As realized, during regular writing of my reflection diary and the field notes, providing thick descriptions of the research context to the readers, and the strategies used as aforementioned, the trustworthiness of this study was improved by the maximum amount possible within its own constraints (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005).

As methodological considerations are discussed here, ensuring trustworthiness of the interpretation of preschooler’s lived experiences in terms of the development of resilience as the purpose of this study is crucial. As a result, several strategies were adopted to enhance trustworthiness in this study, including: triangulation by using multiple methods of data collection; the profound engagement in the three preschool sites and the close observation of the participant children’s preschool lives; the debriefing and consulting with my supervisors; and continual reflections on my influences on the process of this study.
3.7 Ethics of Research Relationship

As a narrative research heavily relies on the researcher-participant relationship (Chase, 2011; Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000; Creswell, 2012, 2013), it is necessary to comply with ethical practice to ensure that the research conducted causes no harm to the research participants (Josselson, 2007; Piper & Simons, 2005). According to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research in 2007 in Australia, the research requirement of Griffith University for each researcher is the completion and submission of the ethical clearance to the human research ethics committee (Griffith University, n.d.). By doing so, I obtained approval from the ethics committee prior to entering the three public preschools in Taiwan.

The Participant Information Statement (Appendix C) and the Informed Consent Form (Appendix D) are a part of the ethical requirement of Griffith University. Both documents were translated into Chinese as this is the official language the participants used. The several steps for selecting participants illustrates that all teachers and children in the three Taiwanese public preschools were informed by me in person (3.4.2 Selection of research participants), while the children’s custodians were notified by both the information statement and the consent form, which were presented by the teachers in the three preschools. Although only the participant custodian had to sign the consent form, I further assured participant children’s willingness by asking them “Do you want to be a participant in this study? And do you want to be filmed?” When introducing my study to the teachers and children at the outset of the data collection, I committed to maintaining their confidentiality and protecting their privacy. As the basis of research ethical issues, the research sites and participants’ identities were treated confidentially and anonymously (Josselson, 2007; Piper & Simons, 2005).

From the perspective of narrative research, Josselson (2007) believes that affective expression in interviews is normal, and it should be based on a secure and respectful researcher-researched relationship. Alderson and Morrow (2011) highlight that if research involves young children as participants, the relationships between them and researchers should be taken into consideration. In this study, preschoolers were my main participants so I followed Alderson and Morrow’s suggestions (2011) by taking
several steps to ensure the ethics of working with young children were adhered to. These were:

- gaining their permission to be filmed;
- maintaining their privacy and confidentiality;
- respecting all the responses they provided me;
- allowing them to watch and hear their own recordings when they asked;
- giving non-judgemental responses, but still showing my interest in listening to them.

As the purpose of this study was to obtain lived experiences in relation to the resilience of young children who experience life difficulties in their ecologies, I was in close proximity to them whilst observing and participating in their preschool lives. For this reason, I had to be more aware of their emotional reactions. For instance, when the children experienced any negative emotions as they recalled and narrated their stories of adversity, such as fear of darkness, feeling upset due to family separation, they could, at any time, stop sharing. In this scenario, I did not coerce their disclosure but took the position of an empathetic comforter. Narrative researchers are not complete outsiders who can avoid the participants’ emotions during a study as the researcher attempts to hear the participants’ lived experiences by entering their lives and interviewing them (Chase, 2011; Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000). Furthermore, as the purpose of this study, the children’s emotional reactions are also an important part of the data, which should not be overlooked.

3.8 Summary

This chapter outlined the interpretivist paradigm and narrative approach adopted in this study. Based on this methodology, preschoolers’ lived experiences in terms of resilience were explored which is vital to the purpose of this study. The multiple sources of data collection, including children’s classroom observations, preschoolers’ interviews and documents, their parents’ interviews, preschool teachers’ interviews and my field
notes, were transcribed, coded, and translated. During the period of collecting multiple data, an initial data analysis was also started. According to RO1 and RO2, there were two analytical frameworks developed by Riessman’s dialogic/performance narrative analysis and BEST as a theoretical framework. To explore children’s narratives of resilience in RO1, narrative analysis fundamentally guided interpretations of each participant child’s story around themes related to the development of an individual’s resilience. The analysis of RO2 was guided by the theoretically thematic framework in accordance with BEST and resilience literature in order to reveal influential elements and interactions on the development of children’s resilience.

Furthermore, this study was conducted in three public preschools in Taiwan where the children’s first language was either Taiwanese or Mandarin, and as a result language translations to English raised concerns. To ensure the translation in this study was valid and reliable, there were important strategies implemented, such as the assistance from a bilingual volunteer, back translation, and consultations with my supervisors. At the end of this chapter, the methods employed to improve trustworthiness of this study, and the ethics of the research relationships I had with my participants were both addressed.

Consistent with the narrative methodology and the multiple methods of data collection and data analysis discussed here, the following two chapters present the two main findings of RO1 and RO2, narratives of resilience and sources of resilience, respectively.
Chapter 4: Findings of RO1: Narratives of Resilience

4.1 Overview

Nine children’s stories of resilience were studied, drawn from three public preschools in Taiwan, as described in Chapter 3. Five participants’ narratives of resilience were the focus of analysis for this study, and these are presented in the two findings chapters. These five stories provide rich studies of childrens’ experience of resilience in preschools in Taiwan; and deepen understandings about the role that social and contextual elements can play in those experiences. The remaining four children’s stories of resilience can be found in Appendix R.

Through the lens of BEST, this study aims to explore the lived experience of preschoolers’ resilience when they engage and interact with teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in the public preschools in Taiwan. In order to achieve this, the following two purposes will be explored separately, in Chapters 4 and 5. This chapter presents the findings of RO1.

RO1: Explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories and then engage in story discussions.

RO2: Explore the content of children’s narratives to identify some influential elements and interactions between the children and their influential ecologies on the resilience development through the lens of BEST.

To delineate the five preschool children’s narratives of resilience this chapter presents the each of the stories in three sections. The first section contains the description of the individual story of resilience. The core plot of that individual story consists of the influential elements present in the child’s lived experience, how the child interacts with teachers’ storytelling and engages in story discussions, and how the child’s resilience is developed. The second section is a narrative analysis and interpretation. This section uses the narrative analytical framework developed from
Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis outlined in Chapter 3 (illustrated in Table 3.8) and guides the analysis of the five preschoolers’ narratives in terms of their lived experiences of resilience. The last section is a summary which concludes each story of resilience and interpretation.

As each child’s story represents a unique context where his/her lived experience was shaped, an so a description of the specific preschool context from which it was drawn provides is provided. Prior to the findings of the five individual children’s stories of resilience, the structure of this chapter commences with the context of the three preschools, including physical environments, their curricula, and the resilience-orientated stories I selected.

This chapter presents five resilience stories in the three public preschools:

- Howard’s confusion over understanding his parental separation in Urban Preschool;
- Kelvin’s useful coping strategy for his anger after losing a competition in Urban Preschool;
- Timothy’s increased engagement in teachers’ storytelling despite low learning motivation in both Maths and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols lessons in Countryside Preschool;
- Victor’s improvement in interpersonal relationships with his peers in Coast Preschool;
- Ian surmounting his fear of darkness in Coast Preschool.

The names of the preschoolers in these five stories, and all names used in narrative texts are pseudonyms.

4.2 Urban Preschool

Urban Preschool is located in the west of the central Taichung City and affiliated with a public elementary school which has over a hundred years of history. When
driving to the preschool, I had to pass through several business districts, shopping malls, financial centres, and the local government office. As a result of the influence of its geographic location, the head teacher of the Urban Preschool pointed out that the majority of parents or caregivers were businessmen, teachers, and public servants.

Urban Preschool was a double-storey building which consisted of a large office, seven classrooms, one functional room, and a library. As Urban Preschool was affiliated with the elementary school, all the resources and space were shared. There were two playgrounds; the big playground in the elementary school where preschoolers would run and have their morning exercises, and the smaller preschool playground, which had seesaws, swings, slides, and horizontal bars, was for the use of preschoolers only.

In the previous chapter, Table 3.1 indicates that there were two qualified teachers (Miss Bella and Miss Cindy) and one student teacher (Miss Marie) in Rabbit Class, one of the seven classes in Urban Preschool, where I observed and studied. The description of physical environment here relates only in this classroom, together with its curriculum, and the selection of the resilience-orientated stories. After the illustration of the classroom context, Howard and Kelvin’s stories of resilience are described.

Physical environment

Rabbit Class, where I collected the data, was one of the seven classes in Urban Preschool (Table 3.1). Rabbit Classroom is designed as an open learning space which includes five learning centres. I used video recordings to assist my observations, mainly in the context of the role-play centre (Figure 4.1), reading centre (Figure 4.2), and the group discussion area (Figure 4.3). Table 4.1 illustrates Urban Preschool’s daily timetable. In the free time for exploration, children could liberally choose different learning centres, such as the block centre, art centre, reading centre, role-play centre, and science centre, depending on where they wanted to play. However, when the teachers taught thematic curriculum, literacy and numeracy lessons, or held storytelling time, children were assembled in the group discussion area.

9 Thematic curriculum refers to the curriculum integration of different learning domains in the same theme implemented over the period of time.
Table 4.1 outlines my data collection times. I participated in Rabbit Class on Monday morning from 8 AM to 1 PM, and Friday from 8AM to 5 PM for 16 weeks. Although the children were picked up around 4 PM, I sometimes stayed after school in order to informally interview the participant’s parents and the teachers.
Table 4.1

*Urban Preschool Classroom Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:50-08:30</td>
<td>Free time for exploration in learning centres</td>
<td>Free time for exploration in learning centres (Physical activities)</td>
<td>Story time</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td>Free time for exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:30-09:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00-10:00</td>
<td>Story time</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Group discussion</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:30</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30-11:30</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td>Transition time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-14:30</td>
<td>Nap time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-15:00</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00-16:00</td>
<td>Free time for exploration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Curriculum*

There was one theme implemented during the whole semester in Rabbit Class, which was “Line”. The thematic teaching web is presented in Appendix L. Although the teachers and I attempted to integrate the notion of resilience into the thematic curriculum, there were some difficulties. Therefore, the thematic curriculum was separated from the teachers’ storytelling time, and instead Miss Bella and Miss Cindy decided to create a specific time for preschoolers to listen to resilience-orientated stories. However, as preschoolers’ resilience development changed over time, I observed and interviewed the participant preschoolers not only during the storytelling time, but also during other lessons.

*Resilience-orientated stories*

Resilience-orientated stories have been defined in Chapter 3. The story topics that helped preschoolers in this study develop their resilience are diverse. The implementation of the stories was depicted in Chapter 3. In Rabbit class, there were five topics of resilience-orientated storybooks selected in response to the lived difficulties the children faced: death, emotional issues, problem solving, positive thinking, and single-parent family and diverse family structures. Although I chose 30 stories in total in relation to these five topics, Miss Bella and Miss Cindy told 15 of these stories over 16 weeks. The stories told are summarized in Appendix M. There were seven resilience-orientated stories mentioned in Howard and Kelvin’s stories of resilience in this thesis.
Howard and Kelvin’s narratives of resilience are presented separately. The structure of each story of resilience begins with descriptive narrative data, followed by narrative interpretation and analysis, and, at the end, a summary. Howard and Kelvin’s narrative interpretation and analysis were guided by the narrative analytical framework outlined in Chapter 3. Additionally, the use of Extracts provides original data to support my interpretation of the five stories. In the Extracts, underlined text highlights any significant evidence of children’s resilience development, and bold text represents the research participants raising their voices in order to emphasize important points.

4.2.1 Howard: From confusion to understanding his parental separation

Extract 4.1 Howard’s observation (Observation 20150109ACH)

*Friday morning I brought six storybooks into class, ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’, ‘I Have Two Homes’, ‘Will You Still Love Me’, ‘My Daddy and Mommy Did Not Live Together’, ‘Family Forest’, and ‘Dinosaurs Divorce.’ After Miss Cindy told the first story, Miss Bella quickly read the title of these storybooks to children and placed them in the reading centre as is custom.(…) Then, when it was time for the children to borrow a book from the reading centre to read with their parents on the weekend, Howard went to the reading centre and straight away picked up ‘I Have Two Homes’. (…) Between lunch and nap time, the children who finish their lunch can go to the preschool playground to play their favourite games. I saw Kelvin (the second research participant) and a few boys already waiting outside for Miss Marie to take them to the playground. Kelvin asked Howard loudly from outside, “Howard, come on. Don’t you want to play on the swing?” Howard looked outside to Kelvin, shook his head and waved his hands showing he did not want to go. Instead, he walked to the reading centre and read ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’, and ‘Family Forest’ until nap time.*
Figure 4.4 Howard’s reading worksheet – ‘I Have Two Homes’

The core of Howard’s story is shown in Figure 4.4. It not only represents Howard’s narrative of resilience, but also manifests the understanding of his parental separation through the reading of resilience-orientated stories and engaging in the teachers’ storytelling.

Howard’s story

Howard was 5 years and 9 months old when participating in this study in September, 2014. Howard has never been diagnosed with any physical or mental disability, and was judged to be intelligent, sympathetic and possessed well-developed social skills at the time of my data collection. As such, Howard might be considered as an unsuitable candidate for this study. However, the contradictory behaviour he displayed between his outstanding academic and social performances, and his unstable emotional expressions, made him a suitable participant.
High learning motivation and achievement and well-developed social skills

Extract 4.2 Miss Cindy and Miss Bella’s informal interviews (Interview 20141027ATC)

“Howard is the best student I have ever taught because of his good behaviour, obedience, consideration, and intelligence.” Miss Cindy described her perception of Howard.

“Howard always behaves well and engages in learning activities. His performance in reading and mathematics lessons is incredibly good. He is a student that all teachers would love to have.” Miss Bella’s comment about Howard.

The two teachers frequently praised Howard who was intelligent and interacted well with other children. As per the classroom observations, Howard quietly listened to the teachers and engaged with the various learning activities. He was an advanced reader as he could read the Chinese characters without assistance of Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, and also completed his mathematics assignments quickly and accurately while most of the other children in his class still relied on the teachers’ assistance.

Although occasionally he played jokes on others, he had well-developed interpersonal social skills. Howard was also an active comforter and mediator when his classmates had arguments. For instance, a quarrel occurred in the classroom while Miss Bella and Cindy were still instructing the majority of children in one of the mathematics lesson. Howard inserted himself into the argument and attempted to calm the situation down.

Extract 4.3 Howard conciliated peers’ argument (Observation 20141208ACH)

*Kelvin* (was angry with one of his classmates and shouted at him.) “You (Ray) let John see your answer while we were working on our mathematics task.”

*Ray* (kindly explained) “No, I didn’t. I did not show my answer to him (John).”

*Howard* (While Kelvin was still very irritated and arguing with Ray, Howard walked towards them. Howard gently touched Ray’s
shoulder and turned to Kelvin.) “What’s going on? Could I do something for you?”

While Kelvin and Ray were arguing, Howard and three other preschoolers who had already submitted their worksheets gathered around. Due to Kelvin’s angry voice, a few bystanders remained quiet, until Miss Cindy and Miss Bella reminded them to help. Howard initiated his involvement by asking about the situation, and by comforting Ray by gently touching his shoulder.

Unstable emotional expressions and parents’ divorce

Extract 4.4 Howard burst into tears (Observation 20141013ACH)
One day after lunch, all the children were going to take a nap. Some began to ask either Miss Bella or Miss Cindy and the student teacher, Miss Marie, about whether or not they could stay on the teachers’ mattresses. It was transition time and very noisy in the classroom, but the sound of someone bursting into tears caught my attention. Howard was one of the children who had asked to stay with Miss Bella: however, he was too late to make his request as Miss Bella had already promised the others in advance. When Howard insistently reserved Miss Bella’s space for another day, he was rejected again and for the same reason. As Howard thought the closest time he could have was next week, he burst into tears and then cried for over 15 minutes.

I knew this was not the first time he had cried in the classroom, but after observing this event from beginning to end it seemed like disproportionate behaviour for Howard. Bursting into tears and crying for over a quarter of an hour over such a small matter made me wonder about the real reason he was so upset. My thoughts on this subject are outlined as follows:

Extract 4.5 My reflection of Howard’s crying (Reflection 20141013)

Howard cried today. Again? Why? I don’t know.
Must be something wrong with this boy…Was he sick? Was that a reason? That he could not stay beside a teacher?
He is such a “good” boy. Maybe I should try to chat with him.
Another example of Howard’s sensitivity was when he cried in a group discussion a few days later. The reason he felt upset was because Miss Bella gently pointed out some of the inattentive children, including Howard.

Extract 4.6 Howard’s crying observation (Observation 20141020)

Howard’s breathing was jerky; his nose was red and his eyes were full of tears. Although Miss Bella asked him to cool down, Miss Cindy eventually had to step in and comfort Howard who could not hold back his tears.

After this observation, compared with Howard’s outstanding performance in academics and interpersonal interactions, the frequency of his crying, or the reason he would burst into tears, was noticeably contradictory. I reflected on the possibility of Howard’s unstable emotional expressions as below.

Extract 4.7 My reflection of Howard’s crying (Reflection 20141020)

I’m really interested to know the reason for Howard’s crying. Was it possible it was because of the humiliation of being pointed out as a temporarily inattentive student? Then, why wasn’t he in tears every time when Miss Bella had reminded Howard of concentrating in her class? Or did Howard just cry for teachers’ attention? Howard definitely had more attention as the teachers would comfort him with hugs when crying. But, why did he need teachers’ attention by crying as Miss Bella and Miss Cindy viewed him as the best student they have ever had? (... Did he lack attention at home?)

Over several weeks, I reviewed the observations of Howard’s emotional expressions in the classroom. This was not only because Howard burst into tears a few times within a short period of time, and for trivial reasons, but also because he needed intensive emotional support and showed attachment behaviours by embracing the teachers.

Extract 4.8 My reflection of Howard’s crying (Reflection 20141023)

I have not seen examples of preschool children aged 5-6 who love hugging their teachers so often. Certainly, Miss Bella and Miss Cindy always actively
embraced these children in return. I could feel the intimate attachment between the teachers and children, especially Howard and the other two children. This was a very interesting teacher-child interaction and relationship for me. (...) Have they been emotionally neglected at home? Did the teachers also feel that the frequency of showing their love to the children was overly intensive?

With these questions in mind, I observed Howard and frequently interacted with him. I initially shared my weekend life with him in order to find a topic to chat about. After breaking the ice, he told me his lived experience over one weekend.

Extract 4.9 Howard’s weekend life (Interview20141027ACH)

_**I**_ (omitted the sharing of my weekend life to Howard.) _“What did you do on the weekend?” (omitted other children’s sharing.)_

_**Howard**_ (answered smiling) _“I went to the National Museum of Marine Biology and the Aquarium.”_

_**I**_ _“Wow! You must have had a great time with your mum and dad, didn’t you?”_

_**Howard**_ _“Yes! I did. It was so much fun there.”_ (He was going to say something but he paused and looked hesitant.) _“I went with my dad and my grandpa and grandma (from paternal side).”_ (He clarified after pausing.)

_**I**_ _“That sounds wonderful. Why didn’t your mother go as well? Was she sick?”_

_**Howard**_ _“No.”_ (He went silent for 11 seconds. Although I had no specific clues to assume Howard’s parents had divorced, I tried to let Howard talk more.)

_**I**_ _“...so, when are you going to see your father again?”_

_**Howard**_ (He looked confused, and answered hesitantly) _“I don’t know. He (Howard’s father) lives very far. Tainan (in southern Taiwan). Do you know where Tainan is?”_

Howard’s silence and attitude changes during the narrative can be seen in Extract 4.10. Furthermore, Howard mentioned that his parents lived in two different
cities which sounded like a sign of parental separation. I had a deep reflection on my personal experience with Howard’s narrative, as outlined below.

Extract 4.10 My reflection of Howard’s interview (Reflection 20141027)

After Howard’s weekend-life sharing, I had a very strong assumption that his parents must be separated or divorced. Howard, somehow… was very similar to me. Can’t tell how I have this strange feeling. (…) My parents divorced when I was about Howard’s age. I was very considerate of people’s emotions and empathized with other people’s feelings towards me and expectations of me. I felt suddenly I could understand Howard’s contradictory behaviour (…).

When I confirmed my presumption with Miss Cindy in terms of the status of Howard’s parents’ marriage, she was surprised.

Extract 4.11 Miss Cindy’s informal interview (Interview20141027ATC)

Miss Cindy “Yes, they divorced. Howard’s mother has not talked about Howard’s father to us, but when Howard was enrolled his mother had to complete Howard’s personal information form, which showed they had divorced. But how do you know that? Did Howard tell you?”

I “No, he did not mention his parents’ divorce when I talked to him today. (…) I don’t think he understands what’s going on between his parents. (This is probably a reason for Howard’s contradictory behaviour). (…) The way he shared his family weekend life made me wonder. It seems he did not live with his father, and his mother did not join the family trip. Little clue. And (I) would like to confirm with you.”

Miss Cindy “(…) I agree that Howard doesn’t know about his parents’ divorce.”

After confirming Howard’s parents’ divorce, I continued observing Howard’s academic and social performances, and emotional expressions. While his performances were not affected, his frequent tearful outbursts continued. That was until I brought the
six resilience-orientated stories\textsuperscript{10} in relation to the topics of single family and diverse family structures into the classroom. Howard manifested his eagerness for reading these storybooks as outlined at the beginning of Howard’s story.

\textit{Eager to read the stories related to his lived experience}

After the six resilience-orientated stories were placed in the reading centre, Howard eagerly and repeatedly read all of them at preschool, shown in Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure456.png}
\caption{Howard’s reading 1 and 2}
\end{figure}

Howard’s reading competence was outstanding. Generally, preschool children at aged 5 to 6 in Taiwan begin to recognize 37 Mandarin Phonetic Symbols\textsuperscript{11}, and some children might learn how to pronounce these symbols and the combination of the Symbols. Howard however, as an advanced reader, could not only pronounce all the Symbols properly, but also read Chinese characters directly without relying on the Symbols to pronounce them. Therefore, when he went to the reading centre, he deliberately picked up these resilience-orientated storybooks from the book shelf, knowing exactly what they were about. He reread ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy,’ and looked at each illustration in this storybook meticulously.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{10} “Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy”, “I Have Two Homes”, “Will You Still Love Me”, “My Daddy and Mommy Did Not Live Together”, “Family Forest”, and “Dinosaurs Divorce.”
\textsuperscript{11} Mandarin Phonetic Symbols is a system of pronunciation to pronounce Chinese characters.
\end{footnotesize}
Understanding of his parental separation through teachers’ storytelling and discussions

Figure 4.4 illustrated Howard’s understanding of his parental separation after reading ‘I Have Two Homes’ with his mother. He shared his lived experience with Miss Bella in the free time for exploration (Table 4.1).

Extract 4.12 Sharing the drawing of ‘I Have Two Homes’ (Observation 20150112ACH)

Miss Bella (held Howard’s reading worksheet and asked him) “What did you read this weekend?”

Howard (hugged Miss Bella.) “I Have Two Homes.”

Miss Bella (hugged Howard in return.) “I see. What did you draw?”

Howard (shyly smiled. He pointed to the only figure as himself on his worksheet and explained it.) “I am in this house and sometimes I went to my father’s house.”

Miss Bella “I can see there is an arrow in between the two houses.”

Howard “Yes. Mmm...(paused). I drew ...(paused). This is wrong (He pointed to the black colour in the middle of his father’s house). I drew it wrong. Haha...(laughing).”

After that, when Miss Bella told the ‘I Have Two Homes’ story in the classroom, Howard opened up about his lived experience which was similar to the story.

Extract 4.13 Discussion of ‘I Have Two Homes’ (Observation 20150112ACH)

Miss Bella (disclosed herself) “I have two homes as the girl in the story has. One home is in Taipei, where my parents live, and the other is in Taichung, where I work. How many homes do you have?”

Ray (raised his hand.) “I have five homes. My parents’, auntie’s, uncle’s, grandparents’ and oh…Ali’s home.” (While Ray was naming them, his fingers were also counting.)

Others (...As Miss Bella’s disclosure sounded positive and interesting, all the preschoolers passionately started a competition over the number of homes they have. It seemed that the more they have the better they felt.)
Howard (This competition led Howard to talk about his family situation, when Miss Bella asked him.) “I have two homes as the girl does in the story.”

After the storytelling, Howard mentioned he had two homes as the story character has. Later in the playground, he changed his answer from two to four.

Extract 4.14 Howard’s narrative in the playground (Observation 20150116ACH)
The children’s conversation relating to the competition over the number of homes they have has continued for a week. A few days later, when all of the children played skipping rope, swinging, and games in the playground someone started talking about how many homes they had.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Jo (...) “No, you don’t count your friend’s home as your home.”
  \item William “Why not? Ray also counted his best friend’s home.”
  \item Jo “Because you don’t sleep in your friend’s place.”
  \item William “I did. Anyway, I have six homes.” (William was laughing after he proudly said that.)
  \item Howard (joined the competitive conversation, and happily shared his homes.) “I think I should count my two grandparents’ homes in with my mother’s home, and my father’s home, so I have four homes in total.”
\end{itemize}

Howard engaged with his peers in the competition of counting the number of homes they had.

\textit{Projecting himself into the story and reading as a comforter}

The teachers’ recording of children’s borrowing history and my observations in the reading centre showed that Howard demonstrated his reading preference for these stories. Furthermore, Howard projected himself into these stories.

Extract 4.15 Howard’s repeated reading (Interview 20150120 ACH)

I (Howard was reading ‘I Have Two Homes’ in the reading centre in the exploration time. I waited until he finished his reading.)
“Howard, I saw you read this book a few times.”

Howard  “…” (He nodded his head and shyly smiled to me.)

I  “Would you like to share this story with me?”

Howard (shrugged his shoulders.) “I have two homes as well. My father’s home and mother’s home.” (He pointed to one of the illustrations showing that the girl character in the middle is talking to her daddy and mommy on the phone when they cannot see each other.)

“I also talk to my father on the phone sometimes.”

I  “So, this story is also your story, isn’t it?”

Howard  “Yes.” (After he said yes, he shook his head showing NO.) “But I am not a girl (the main character is a girl). And I don’t have pets (some story plots are different from Howard’s lived experience). See. We are different.”

I  “mmm…What else?”

Howard (shrugged his shoulders and left the reading centre.)

Howard found some similarities between his real lived experience and the main characters in some resilience-orientated stories, which corresponded to the status and reasons for his parents living separately. Howard’s attitude towards his parents living apart shifted. After reading these stories, he narrated his family lived experience. When he spoke about his parents who were no longer living together in my interviews and in front of his classmates, Howard did not hesitate to acknowledge the facts of his situation.

Positive thinking and speaking out loud about parental separation

In the story discussion of ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy,’ Miss Cindy took advantage of the previous topic of resilience-orientated stories, positive thinking, in order to learn children’s perception of this post-divorce family story. Hence, Miss Cindy asked the children “Whether the story character’s parents living separately in the story was good or bad news.”
Extract 4.16 Discussion of ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’
(Observation 20150109 ACH)
Miss Cindy  “Ray (one of the preschoolers) felt that this is bad news because the boy (story character) cannot see his parents at the same time. How do you think that the boy’s parents came to not live together? Does anyone believe this is good news?”
Howard (raised his hand.) “I reckon that this is good news because his parents would not quarrel. And the boy can call his father or mother if he misses them.”

Howard’s answer indicated his positive thinking about parental separation which he imitated from the story. The reasons he provided, such as no more arguments between the parents and phone calls, were derived from the two story plots of ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’ (Appendix M).

Extract 4.17 Speak out about parental separation in a group discussion
(Observation 20150119ACH)
(At the end of the semester, the children were having a big performance to show the outcome of their learning in the thematic curriculum. While discussing how many parents would like to watch this performance, the children have to count how many seats and tickets they should prepare.)
Kelvin  “2,4,6,8,10….” (While he was calculating the number, he was touching each person’s head as a counting marker. Kelvin was counting even numbers because he assumed that everyone had a father and mother and therefore, he counted two seats for each child. When Kelvin counted, he touched Howard’s head)
Howard (immediately told Kelvin) “Only my mother will come because my father is not living with us. They are separated. My father is in Tainan. It is too far to join our show.”
Ivy  (A girl sat beside Howard, whose eyes were wide when she heard Howard’s reply.) “Did your parents separate?”
Howard “Yes, they did (separate). They are not living together.” (He nodded his head and responded to Ivy quickly.)
After rereading these stories, engaging in the story discussions and the competition over the number of homes, Howard spoke out about his parental separation in public.

Extract 4.18 Reflection of Howard’s announcement (Reflection 20150119)

...I can’t believe what I saw today. (...) Howard cheerfully ‘announced’ his parental separation to all of us due to his father’s impossibility to attend the performance. (...) I had eye contact with Miss Bella at that time. I am sure she was touched by that.

Howard’s narrative of resilience was still ongoing, although data collection in Rabbit Class was almost completed at this point. I attempted to keep Howard’s narrative as a main voice in his story in order to demonstrate his resilience learning, but in line with narrative tenets, the multiple voices supported by Riessman’s dialogue/performance analysis interweave with my interpretation in the next section.

**Narrative analysis and interpretation**

The implementation of the narrative analytical framework in Howard’s narrative of resilience focused on his contradictory behaviour between successful performances and unstable emotional expressions in his preschool lived experience, his interaction with resilience-orientated stories, his meaning-making of lived experience in parental separation, and the influence of my personal experience on Howard’s narrative interpretation.

*Conflicting performance as an implication of being at-risk*

Howard’s high learning motivation, successful academic performance, great interpersonal relationships with peers, and good behaviour defined him as an ideal student by his preschool teachers (Extract 4.1). For these reasons, I did not view Howard as an at-risk child during my initial observations. Furthermore, because of his satisfactory performance, when his subtle contradictory behaviour, such as tearful outbursts (Extract 4.4), crying over trivial reasons (Extract 4.6), or the excessive embracing of his teachers (Extract 4.8) occurred in comparison to his academic
achievement and well-developed social skills, these behaviours tended to be overlooked. Until I observed that the frequency of Howard’s unstable emotional expressions and unsatisfied emotional needs was unreasonable, I manifested my concern to Miss Bella in one of the interviews.

Extract 4.19 Interview with Miss Bella

Miss Bella “I did not feel Howard was different from the other 24 kids in the beginning because I always build a strong relationship with each child, but he keeps hugging me several times a day, and crying when I cannot stay with him during nap time. This gives me the strong feeling that I have to provide emotional support to him. And I have not had this type of student, who needs a large amount of emotional attention in my 7-year teaching career.”

I “How do you feel about Howard’s emotional attachment?”

Miss Bella “Actually, I have reflected on this situation. Sometimes I feel I am inadequate to provide so much love to them, especially for Howard. This is because I feel there is a hole in his heart and I would never fill it up. And sometimes I doubt whether I should give them so much embraces, kisses and love as a preschool teacher. (…) I know he was emotionally attached to his mother. I wonder if he feels insecure because of his parents’ divorce. I don’t know.”

This interview was conducted after the confirmation of Howard’s parents’ divorce. While Miss Bella confirmed Howard’s unsatisfied emotional needs, she did not notice Howard’s contradictory behaviour between his outstanding performance and unstable emotions. As Howard had already been identified as a “good” student by both teachers (Extract 4.5), it was almost impossible to classify him in the category of “at-risk” children. This oversight of his emotional state may have affected Howard’s resilience development, although it didn’t seem to influence his interpersonal relationships and learning. Howard’s contradictory performance was a sign of being at-risk.
Projective and comforting interactions with resilience-orientated stories

Until the possible reason for Howard’s unstable emotions was revealed, his interaction with resilience-orientated stories in relation to single-parent families was enthusiastic (Extract 4.1). Such stories were important to Howard. It was evident that when Kelvin asked Howard to go to the playground, where the vast majority of children love to play, Howard rejected this suggestion in order to stay in the reading centre to read the six storybooks (Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6). This strong and persistent reading momentum, contrasted with Howard’s unsatisfied emotional needs identified in Miss Bella’s interview (Extract 4.19) showed the negative influence of his parents’ divorce. If there was a hole in Howard’s heart, these stories would help provide answers for him, and maybe assist in filling it.

Howard’s repeated reading effectively provided the comfort he needed (Extract 4.15). Through rereading the resilience-orientated stories relating to post-divorce adjustment, Howard projected himself into diverse perspectives of being a child of a single-parent family. For example, he found similarity in the plot of ‘I Have Two Homes’ (Extract 4.15). Howard shared that he had two homes and that he called his father sometimes, which was similar to the story. ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’ was projected in Howard’s lived experience as well. When I asked why he always spent more time on viewing one illustration showing a child of a single-parent family taking a train with his father, Howard told me that, “My daddy took me to take a high speed train before.” These stories seems to have a strong association with Howard’s lived experience.

Making meaning by acknowledging parental separation

Prior to learning about Howard’s parents’ divorce, I perceived that Howard was confused about the status of his parents living in different cities. For example, in Extract 4.9, Howard talked about one of his weekend lived experiences, telling of how he went to the National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium in Kaohsiung, the south of Taiwan, with his father and grandparents. His grandparents were apparently his paternal ones, as grandparents conventionally stay with their sons in the patriarchal society in Taiwan. I noticed that Howard did not refer to his mother in his initial narrative, so I
clarified my understanding of the absent mother in that trip. After Howard’s silence, how his attitude towards my questions changed, and my observation of his unstable emotional expressions, I confirmed my assumption of Howard’s parents’ divorce by asking about the frequency of his visits with his father, instead of directly questioning him about the divorce. I did this for two reasons; the first was that Howard might not know what the meaning of divorce was; the second was that his parents likely did not want to let him know about the separation and/or the divorce. Moreover, although Howard did not know when he could visit his father again, he pointed out that his father lived in another city. Howard and his mother lived in Taichung, while his father stayed in Tainan, which takes at least two hours to drive to. All of Howard’s weekend lived experience sharing provided a clear picture to me that when Howard accompanied his father, his mother was absent, and vice versa.

From Howard’s perspective, his understanding of parental separation was not associated with his parents’ divorce. In other words, after reading the resilience-orientated stories related to a single-parent family, although Howard recognized the fact that his parents had separated, he did not really understand the term “divorce” for a few reasons. Firstly, Howard’s mother had never talked about her divorce which occurred when Howard was around two years old.

Extract 4.20 Interview with Howard’s mother (Interview 20150315APH)

I “I have seen Howard’s Parent-Child Reading worksheet (Figure 4.4). He drew his two homes and you wrote a sentence as a comment at the end. (...) I would like to know what did you think about that?”

Howard’s mother “Mmm,... I did not know how to explain that (Howard) his father and I divorced when he was little. And he has never asked me about it. Even to know why his father does not live with us. (Pause a few seconds.) I thought that I might tell him when he can understand what divorce means. Until he borrowed that book, and when I read it with Howard, I was very touched by the story. I mean the way the story tries to tell a child of a single-parent family was full of love and positivity. I still did not mention our divorce to him even
though I knew it was a good chance to tell him through the story. (Pause a few seconds.) I hope he can understand the meaning of the story so I wrote that comment.(…)"

Moreover, Howard has never mentioned “divorce” in his narratives. Nevertheless, “They are not living together”, as Howard put it when he spoke out in the group discussion time (Extract 4.17), should be recognized as parental separation. The third reason was that the contents of the two resilience-orientated stories, ‘Mommy and Me, Sometimes and Daddy’ and ‘I Have Two Homes,’ told in the classroom did not use the term “divorce” to describe the change of post-divorce lived experience. These stories use the children’s perspective and appropriate language to depict a difficult topic, one that even Howard’s mother did not know how to explain.

As a result, Howard’s first meaning of parental separation was similar to not living together. However, parental separation theoretically, was different from a parents’ divorce. Although Howard might not understand parents’ divorce, I still used this term on two occasions. The first case was when the conversations were among the teachers, Howard’s mother and I. The second occasion was in my interpretation. This was because parental separation could result from diverse reasons, such as divorce, distant workplaces, illness or disasters. The influence of parents’ divorce on childhood development may be different from that of other reasons.

In terms of Howard’s resilience, he made new meaning of his suffering of parental separation by acknowledging it. Howard’s attitude towards his parental separation has changed from confusion to recognition, and as a result his emotions became more stable. The instances of him bursting into tears decreased after the resilience-orientated stories were presented. This evidence showed that Howard demonstrated his resilience by speaking out about his parental separation in public (Extract 4.17). After engaging in the competition over the number of homes (Extract 4.13 and Extract 4.14), Howard no longer hid his real lived experience. As his drawing narrative illustrated, he has lived in both his mother and father’s home separately, and both were equally important to him (Figure 4.4 and Extract 4.12).
Interweaving my childhood lived experience with Howard

I had a strong influence on Howard’s case from the beginning of my data collection. My initial assumption, that Howard’s parents had divorced, during my first month’s observations came from Howard’s contradictory behaviours, and his constant need to embrace and kiss his teachers, but yet still unsatisfying his need for affection. I agreed with Miss Bella that there was a “hole in Howard’s heart” (Extract 4.19). My childhood lived experience was mentioned several times in my reflection dairy; “I could see my childhood shadow on Howard.” As a result, my subjectivity in the influence of Howard’s narrative collection and interpretative analysis was stronger than the other resilient narrators.

Extract 4.21 Interview with Howard’s mother (Cont.) (Interview 20150315APH)

I “What do you think about my interpretation of Howard’s unstable emotional expression at preschool?”

Howard’s mother “Very surprised and shocked in the beginning when I received your report. (Paused a few second.) I feel you made me see a different view of my son; in particular you believe that his unstable emotions are completely influenced by my failed marriage. However, Howard was a very sensitive child since he was born and cried very often. One time, his grandfather, my father, was sick and I took Howard to visit him in hospital. Howard cried after visiting. (…) But sometimes, even I did not know what the reason for him to cry was. (has a sigh.)”

I “So, highly likely Howard was born with a sensitive temperament.”

Howard’s mother “I think he is very sensitive so Howard has never asked me about our divorce. I sometimes feel he is just very considerate of me as he would not want to upset me by asking me these types of questions. (Paused a few second.) I noticed that the frequency of Howard’s crying or being upset is higher after he visits his father, but not always. Somehow. (Paused a few second) I know our divorce also causes his sensitivity. (…)”
In Howard’s mother’s interview, she believed that Howard was born with temperament traits of high sensitivity although she also recognized the effect of her divorce on his sensitivity. In this case, I initially overlooked this personal characteristic in him. Additionally, while Howard’s parents’ divorce could be one of sensory stimuli to him, my primary interpretation did not take Howard’s temperament into consideration. These examples indicated my subjectivity in my reflection diary. Through the confirmation of my revised interpretation of Howard’s story of resilience with his mother, we agreed that Howard’s unstable emotional expression was possible influenced by his parents’ divorce. With this subjective awareness, I reviewed my multiple data from different perspectives. For instance, from Miss Bella’s point of view, Howard’s unsatisfied emotional needs were likely affected by his parents’ divorce (Extract 4.19). Miss Bella’s data as one of the multiple voices supported the credibility of my interpretation. Moreover, there was evidence that Howard and his mother both benefited from the resilience-orientated stories relating to a single-parent family in this regard (Extract 4.15 and Extract 4.20).

**Summary**

Howard’s contradictory performance and unsatisfied emotional needs could be deemed as important signs of being at-risk from parents’ divorce. Through engaging in the teachers’ storytelling and discussion, and rereading the resilience-orientated stories, Howard demonstrated his positive thinking and attitude towards his parental separation, and consequently his unstable emotional expression considerably improved. Despite the fact that my subjectivity may directly or indirectly influence the interpretation of Howard’s narratives, due to my similar lived experience, multiple voices, such as his oral and drawing narratives, his mother and the teachers’ interviews, and my reflection diary provide the interpretive context in Howard’s story of resilience.

The second resilience story in Rabbit Class was Kelvin, who dealt with his anger after losing a competition, which is presented in the next section.
4.2.2 Kelvin: Dealing with his anger after losing a competition

Extract 4.22 Interview with Miss Cindy (Interview20141208ATC)

“Kelvin super cares about his ranking in any activity. He gets frustrated when he is not number one. Very competitive, but we attempted not to have competitions.”

Miss Cindy talked about how she felt about Kelvin’s negative reaction toward his loss after Kelvin had a big argument with the other two boys in a mathematics lesson today.

The content of Figure 4.7 highlights the core elements of Kelvin’s story of resilience. Dealing with Kelvin’s anger, particularly after losing his perceived competitions, was the main goal of enhancing his resilience.


*Kelvin’s story*

Kelvin was 5 years and 7 months when he was recruited as one of my research participants in Urban Preschool in September, 2014. He was an intelligent and healthy boy whose reading and maths calculation skills were as good as his performance in physical education lessons.

Kelvin is the second child in his family and has a brother who is three years older than him. Kelvin grew up in a nuclear family, with parents that were busy working in order to provide a good quality of life for the family. As his parents needed to work long hours, after preschool Kelvin had to go to another cram school until his mother finished work. Kelvin’s parents provided a variety of educational opportunities. For example, he enrolled in his first preschool at the age of three, and before that he had already attended developing potential courses in different institutions.

Per my observations, Kelvin was competitive and exhibited high learning motivation. Kelvin’s interpersonal skills were adequate when he was calm, but Kelvin’s interpersonal problems were triggered by competitions and his competitiveness.

*Competitions and motivation*

Kelvin was keen on participating in competitive games, such as running races, who could swing higher, who could finish their lunch first, and who could complete learning activities the fastest, although the two teachers did not encourage the children to treat these activities as competitions. On the other hand, Kelvin showed higher learning motivation when engaging in a competition.

Extract 4.23 Kelvin’s performance in a weaving task (Observation 20141014ACK)

*Miss Marie*  *(was in charge of helping children weave their scarf in the free time of exploration)*  “Miss Bella agrees that *if you can complete your weaving task quicker, we can go to play in the playground today.*”

*Kelvin*  *(was not interested in this weaving task. Hence, although he knows he hasn’t finished his weaving task, he still played in the block*
centre rather than weaving his scarf. However, when he heard Miss Marie said that, he shouted loudly. “YES!! I will be the first to finish.” (Miss Marie’s announcement seems like a positive reinforcer to motivate the children’s weaving task. Kelvin moved to the art centre and tried to complete his weaving scarf.)

Due to Kelvin’s competitive attitudes, when Miss Marie suggested a reward for completing the weaving task quickly, it motivated him to finish it.

**Negative reaction after losing activities**

The result of a playground running exercise led to Kelvin complaining even though it was not a competition.

**Extract 4.24 Kelvin’s complaint (Observation 20140922ACK)**

*Kelvin*  “oh No…” (Miss Bella and Miss Cindy took all the kids to the playground and did some exercises this morning as usual. Kelvin was waiting on the starting line of the playground before running but he was not happy to see Miss Bella let all the girls run first.)

*Miss Cindy*  “Boys, are you ready?” (All the boys were waiting on the starting line and saying “Yes!”) “Well, before you go, I want to remind you all again. Do not race. Do not take over. Do not push another, and be careful. Ready, Go.”

*Kelvin*  (After around 10 mins, one girl and two boys already ran to the finish line. Kelvin was the fourth one but his facial expression was unhappy. He talked to Ivy who arrived.) “It is unfair because you started first. You should not be number one.”

*Ivy*  (was unhappy to hear Kelvin’s comment.) “Miss Cindy said we were not racing.”

*Kelvin*  (did not directly respond to Ivy’s comment. He kept murmuring.) “If Miss Cindy let the boys run first, I will beat you (the girl). They (Miss Bella and Miss Cindy) always let the girls run first. Unfair. Unfair.”
While Miss Cindy already mentioned it was not a race, Kelvin was still displeased and attributed his loss to Miss Cindy and Miss Bella letting the girls run first. Another example was when Kelvin threw a tantrum during a mathematics lesson. This arose when Kelvin pointed out that his peers had cheated in the mathematics assignment, and for that reason he had lost the chance to be first.

Extract 4.25 Kelvin argued with his peers (Observation 20141208ACK)

**Kelvin** (Kelvin always completes a math assignment very quickly and accurately, but today he went red with rage for over 30 mins because there were two boys who completed the task earlier than him.) “Why did you (Ray) teach him (John)? Why?” (I could see Kelvin clenched his fists and agitatedly blamed Ray for helping John finish the task, but the task should be completed individually.)

**Ray** (explained gently to Kelvin.) “Don’t be angry with me. I did it unintentionally as I did not know at that time.”

**Kelvin** (was even angrier when he heard Ray’s explanation.) “You (Ray) obviously did teach him (John) intentionally.”

**Ray** (looked innocently and explained again.) “I truly did it unintentionally.” (This conversation was back and forth a few times. Ray attempted to ignore Kelvin’s unreasonable argument so he went to pick a storybook up and read.)

**Kelvin** (did not want to stop this argument and shouted loudly.) “Intentional is intentional. What you did is what you know.”

**Ray** (got shocked when he heard Kelvin’s raging voice. Soon after, Ray calmly replied to Kelvin.) “Would you please stop being angry with me over this issue?”

**Kelvin** (walked towards Ray and shouted again.) “NO.”

**Ray** (looked unbelievably at Kelvin because Kelvin was really mad at him.) “Don’t be mad at me. I did not do anything wrong. If you keep shouting at me, then there will be no one who wants to be your friend.”

**Kelvin** (was really mad at Ray. He yelled.) “I don’t care (if I don’t have any friends).”

**Ray** “…” (was speechless and looked at John and the other children looking on. John was with Ray during this argument but John could
not debate with Kelvin as Kelvin’s shouting scared him. In the end, Sean went to tell Miss Bella about Kelvin’s anger.)

Kelvin was furious at Ray who helped John complete the mathematics tasks by providing the answers to him. No matter how Ray attempted to explain it, Kelvin insisted on remaining angry with Ray. Miss Bella eventually intervened and asked Kelvin, Ray and John together about the argument. Ray did not help John with his mathematics assignment; however, Kelvin misunderstood. He thought that John cheated by using Ray’s answers just because they sat together during the lesson. When this misunderstanding was revealed, Kelvin cried in Miss Bella’s arms.

Competitions and reinforcement in cram schools

After I observed several negative instances of learning activities, as described above, Kelvin’s competitive attitude led me to look for that behaviour. The teachers rarely asked children to compete in a learning activity, yet Kelvin fixated on being the best all the time. One morning, Kelvin did not engage in a learning centre in the free time for exploration, and looked like he was irritated from the moment he entered the classroom. I went to chat with Kelvin and incidentally discovered that ‘real’ competitions frequently occurred in Kelvin’s cram school.

Extract 4.26 Kelvin talked about his cram school (Interview 20141212ACK)

I (As he pouted and did not greet the teachers and the other children, there was no one going to talk to Kelvin. After he had sat in his chair for over 15mins, I went to chat with him.) “Good morning, Kelvin.”
Kelvin “…”(looked at me but was still silent.)
I (tried to get him talk. I saw there was a chain of cards with some stickers on them in his preschool bag, so I pointed to the cards.) “What are they? WA...so many stickers. Where did you get this?”
Kelvin “mmm…” (He still looked mad.)
I “…” (looked at his different stickers.)
Kelvin (After 10 seconds, Kelvin began to talk.) “I am going to get 23 stickers more so I can exchange for a Transformer (a Transformers
Kelvin proudly described how he won these stickers and what he could exchange them for when he had a certain amount. This example also showed the reinforcement technique used by the teacher in Kelvin’s cram school to manage the classroom.

Dealing with anger

To help Kelvin deal with his attitude towards losing a competition, and his anger after the competition, there were two types of resilience-orientated stories told in the classroom on the topics of problem-solving skills and positive thinking. The purpose of the story of problem-solving skills aimed to improve Kelvin’s interpersonal relationships by dealing with his anger, while the story of positive thinking was to encourage preschoolers to see different perspectives of winning and losing.

‘Anger’ was one of the resilience-orientated stories told in the class. This story discussed the reasons people felt angry, and recognition of anger itself (Appendix M). The most important part of this storytelling is to assist children with coping with their anger. When Miss Bella discussed this story with all the children, unexpectedly, Kelvin did acknowledge his anger, because his view was that Ray and John cheated in the mathematics assignment (Extract 4.25).
Miss Bella (asked questions in the story discussion.) “OK, Ray said that if his sister throws his toy, he will be mad at her. What makes you feel angry? Kelvin?”

Kelvin (Miss Bella pointed to Kelvin as he raised his hand to answer the question. Kelvin responded loudly and smiling.) “Like my last time.” (While Kelvin recognized his anger over not being the first to complete the mathematics task last time, all the children that knew of that big argument were giggling.)

Miss Bella (was laughing with Kelvin.) “Wow! You are very brave to acknowledge your anger. But why were you angry last time?”

Kelvin (shyly pointed to Ray and John.) “Because Ray provided (mathematics) answers to John.”

Ray (answered back immediately.) “No. I did not (provide my answer to John).”

Miss Bella “I did not see this as well. So, Kelvin, now you know there was no cheating last time. Did you feel good after being angry?”

Kelvin “…” (shook his head.)

Miss Bella “Anger cannot help you to solve the problem, can it?” (All the children said NO.) “Then, what can you do when you are angry? Kelvin?”

Kelvin (smiley looked at Miss Bella and changed his gesture from sitting to squat. While his action was like Hawaiian hula dance, he made his sound like “Da La Da La Da” as his answer to Miss Bella. After one second, all the children laughed at Kelvin’s humour as Kelvin was also laughing loudly.)

Miss Bella (imitated Kelvin’s Hawaiian hula dance and said) “Next time when you are angry, you have to do Da La Da La Da. OK?” (All the children laughed again.)

This story ‘Anger’ reflected Kelvin’s anger after the argument he had with Ray and John (Extract 4.25). This story ended up with a discussion about potential solutions for when the children felt angry. In the story discussion, Kelvin demonstrated his solution of humour to release his anger by his ‘Da La Da La Da’ sound.
After the story discussion, a worksheet enabled all the children to draw on their sharing in terms of their solutions of releasing negative emotions. Figure 4.7, shown at the beginning of Kelvin’s story, indicated that Kelvin drew his three solutions in his worksheet. He further shared his drawing in public.

Extract 4.28 Discussion of “Anger” with worksheets (Observation 20141219ACK)

Miss Marie (collected all the worksheets and asked some children to share their solutions for when they felt angry) “WA. Kelvin drew three solutions on his worksheet and his mother wrote what he drew. Do you want to share? Kelvin?” (Miss Marie held and showed Kelvin’s worksheet to the others.)

Kelvin “…” (timidly shook his head showing he did not want to share his opinion in public.)

Miss Marie (encouraged Kelvin to share and asked him) “Can I read your solutions to everyone because I really like your ideas?”

Kelvin “…” (nodded his head but was still silent.)

Miss Marie “Kelvin’s first solution is listening to music. Secondly, he can…”

Kelvin (interrupted Miss Marie and finished sharing his solutions.) “When I feel angry, I can go to a playground and play. If it is raining, I can play with my toys at home.”

Kelvin’s worksheet and drawing narrative consistently illustrated that through these three solutions, listening to music, exercising, and playing, he could turn his angry facial expression on the left hand side into a happy face, as shown in Figure 4.7. His solutions were very useful and feasible because after this discussion, Kelvin applied these solutions when he felt irritated.

Practicing his solutions of anger in reality

Although Kelvin still cared about winning and losing in most circumstances, and still felt mad if he did not win, his three coping strategies for his anger reduced conflicts with his peers.
Extract 4.29 Kelvin practiced his anger solution (Observation 20141219ACK)

Miss Bella  “OK! Time to go to our playground. Please wear your shoes and line up in our hallway. Let’s go.” (After Miss Bella announced the outdoor play time, Kelvin and some boys ran outside straight away as they wanted to be number one in the line of the others.)

Kelvin  (argued with Ben who seemed to rush to the front of Kelvin.) “You are later than me. You should line up after me.”

Ben  “…” (silently looked at Kelvin but did not want to move to his back.)

Kelvin  “…” (was crossing his arms and angrily looked at the boy who cut in the line.)

Lily  (announced loudly.) “Teachers. Kelvin is angry.”

Miss Bella  (walked towards Kelvin and put her hands on her ears, showing that she is listening to the music.) “Da La Da La Da…”

Kelvin  (all the children seeing Miss Bella sang and used her hand as an earphone were laughing, including Kelvin.) “Da La Da La Da…”

Miss Bella  “WA, listening to music is really a good solution. Kelvin. See you are not angry now.”

After two days discussing with children about dealing with their anger, Kelvin first applied his solution through Miss Bella’s reminder. As Kelvin was mad at his peer for cutting into the line, his mood changed instantly through Miss Bella’s demonstration of his angry solution. Since then, not only Kelvin, but also his peers took advantage of this solution to release Kelvin’s anger.

Extract 4.30 Kelvin played in the role-play centre (Observation 20150120ACK)

Kelvin  (sat on his seat and finished eating his breakfast. He looked around as has not made a decision of which learning centre he wanted to join in with for the free time for exploration. After a few mins later, he walked to the art centre, reading centre and then role-play centre. He stopped in the role-play centre and looked at Girl A and B playing.)

Lulu  (played a mother and Angela pretended to be her baby. When Kelvin looked at them, Lulu invited him to play with them.)
“Kelvin. Do you want to be a dog?”

Kelvin “…” (was still silent but frowned.)

Lulu “No?” (Lulu guessed that Kelvin did not want to play a dog as he frowned. Hence, Lulu passed an earphone toy to Kelvin.)

Kelvin (received the earphone toy and frowned again.) “I am not angry.” (After he said that, all of a sudden, Lulu and I laughed loudly. Then, Kelvin was laughing afterwards.)

Apart from dealing with Kelvin’s anger, I also wanted to raise a discussion around thinking about winning and losing and what they mean. Therefore, I provided a different resilience-orientated story topic in order to learn how to think of losing positively.

Learning positive thinking

I selected the two resilience-orientated stories, “Bad News; Good News”, and “Hurra, gewonnen! Mist, verloren (Win and Loss)” (Appendix M). Through the teachers’ storytelling and open discussions, Kelvin not only has his winning attitude towards a competition in the story, but also began to understand that there can be positive feelings when people lose.

Extract 4.31 Kelvin shared his opinion of win and loss (Observation 20141231ACK)

Miss Bella (In the story discussion of “Hurra, gewonnen! Mist, verloren,” Miss Bella used the core concept of “Bad News; Good News” to guide the children’s thinking of win and loss.) “What do you think? Whether it is good news when the goat wins the game in the story?”

Kelvin (answered straight away.) “Of course. Winning is good news.”

Ray “No, see. He (the goat) loses his best friend, the goose when he wins. It is not good news.”

Miss Bella “Why do you think it is good news? Kelvin?”

Kelvin “Because of winning the game.”

Miss Bella “Why is winning the game good news?”
Kelvin (was wondering for a few seconds.) “Because of a reward.” (After answering, he was laughing.)

Miss Bella (paraphrased children’s answer.) “According to the story, Ray believed that it is bad news because he loses his best friend when the goat wins the game. Then, Kelvin reckoned that winning a game is good news because a winner can have a reward. Right? How about the goose? Is it bad news when the goose loses the game?”

Kelvin (spoke loudly and quickly.) “Certainly, it (the loss) is bad news.”

Miss Bella “I see. Does anyone have different answer?” (A few children supported Kelvin’s initial idea that it is bad news as the goose loses the game, while some believed it is good news as the goose and the goat are still best friends. I omitted a few children’s answers here.)

Kelvin (spoke in a low voice.)”Probably not too bad. Because the goat shared his award with the goose.”

In Kelvin’s narrative, ‘reward’ was the key to determining whether the consequence of winning and losing was good or bad news. In the next section of the narrative analysis and interpretation, Kelvin’s narrative of resilience was focused on dealing with his anger and his response to winning or losing a competition.

**Narrative analysis and interpretation**

The implementation of the narrative analytical framework in Kelvin’s narrative of resilience focused on his competitive attitude in his preschool lived experience, the connection between competitions, reinforcement, learning motivation, and interpersonal relationships, his interaction with resilience-orientated stories, and his meaning-making of lived experience in the result of a competition.

**Winning was everything**

Competitions were meaningful in Kelvin’s lived experience for several reasons. Firstly, he turned a few activities into competitions, such as exercising in the playground (Extract 4.24), weaving a scarf (Extract 4.23), and completing mathematics assignments
Miss Bella and Cindy however, rarely compared individuals with each other, or took advantage of competitions as a teaching strategy because they understood the positive and negative influence on the correlation between competitions and primary rewards or token systems.

Extract 4.32 Informal interview with Miss Bella regarding Kelvin’s argument
(Cont.) (Observation 20141208ACK)
I (after school, Miss Bella was cleaning the classroom.) “What do you think about Kelvin’s anger today?”
Miss Bella “Kelvin cares too much about win and loss, although he does not acknowledge it. Simply to say is he always wants to be the first one completing the math task? This type of argument has been raised several times.”
I “What was the worst scenario when Kelvin lost a competition?”
Miss Bella “Today is the worst one. Kelvin does not have a lack of social skills, and he has never had a physical fight with others, but he can be furious like today.”
I “It seems that Kelvin likes competitions.”
Miss Bella “Yes. I found that if he is involved in a competition, he is easily motivated. However, it is interesting that we (Miss Cindy and Miss Bella) rarely use competition as our teaching strategies, and also I don’t compare children or their performance. I am very careful about it. I believe that token systems might be very useful for classroom management, but in the end the children are behaving because they want to get rewards. This is wrong…. (omit) I know Kelvin’s cram school teachers enormously rely on token systems, and Kelvin gets used to this learning style and cram school environment because he goes to a cram school earlier than a preschool.”

Secondly, Kelvin extremely cared about the result of learning activities. For example, he often complained about unfairness during the morning exercise in the playground as the two teachers let the girls run first, especially when a girl beat him to the finish line (Extract 4.24). Another instance was Kelvin’s rage during one of the
mathematics assignments (Extract 4.25). Even though Kelvin’s argument with Ray over showing his mathematics answer to another looked like an apparent reason, Miss Bella pointed out that wanting to be first was his main concern (Extract 4.32).

The third reason was indicated by Kelvin himself when he responded to the resilience-orientated story, ‘Win and Loss’ (Extract 4.31). In this story, winning or losing were not related to who was right or wrong, but let children think further about how to deal with both outcomes and their consequences. Kelvin projected his opinion during the story discussion that winning was certainly good news because of the rewards.

Kelvin’s competitiveness was exposed in not only my observations, the teachers’ interviews, but also in his narratives. Winning a competition or even a learning activity was important to Kelvin. This affected his learning motivation and relationships with his peers.

The connection between competitions, reinforcement, learning motivation, and interpersonal relationships

Actively participating in a competition was part of Kelvin’s significant lived experiences. There were three important relationships among competitions, reinforcement, learning motivation, and Kelvin’s interpersonal crisis associated with his resilience development. The initial correlation between the competition and reinforcement was built by the teachers in Kelvin’s cram school (Extract 4.26). The token system as positive reinforcement was frequently utilized as classroom management in order to strengthen children’s desired behaviours. As Kelvin went to his cram school earlier than his enrolment in Urban Preschool, he was used to this type of classroom management. His behaviour was shaped by operanting conditioning, meaning that he learnt from the consequences of his behaviour by reward or punishment. In his narrative, reward played a key because Kelvin’s judgement of good or bad news was to see who could gain reward (Extract 4.31). Once this strong association between competitions and reinforcement has been established, Kelvin’s learning motivation would also be shaped by positive reinforcement.
As a result, the second relationship was among learning motivation, competitions and reinforcement. Kelvin showed higher learning motivation when engaging in a competition (Extract 4.23). Before Miss Marie allowed the children who completed their weaving task to play in the playground, Kelvin was not interested in this learning activity. However, playing in the playground was a desired reward to Kelvin; he therefore, went to weave his scarf. The three teachers in Urban Preschool did not reward the children by any tangible token, but individual praise or playing in the playground as a group. Kelvin’s learning was generally motivated by such positive reinforcement.

Although competitions reinforced Kelvin’s learning motivation, the consequence of the competition was challenging to his interpersonal relationships. It was not surprising that Kelvin cared about the result of competitions because losing competitions meant no reward. Hence, Kelvin pursued the goal of winning in any game. With the concern of win and loss, Kelvin would argue the fairness of the game (Extract 4.24). For instance, running in the playground was morning exercise rather than a racing competition, as the teachers always reminded the children. Kelvin however, felt it was unfair to let the girls run first. In the mathematics lesson (Extract 4.25), Miss Cindy and Miss Bella never asked children to compete with each other, but Kelvin was angry with Ray for providing answers to another student. When Kelvin argued with his peers due to his perceived loss, his did not know how to properly deal with the loss of a competition. Therefore, his interpersonal relationship was negatively affected.

*Projecting and humorous interactions with resilience-orientated stories*

In order to assist with his anger and irritation after losing a game, the resilience-orientated story related to coping with negative feelings was told in the classroom. In the story discussion of ‘Anger’, Kelvin recognized his anger in the mathematics lesson and also provided a humorous answer as a coping strategy to release his anger, which was to use the amusing sound ‘Da La Da La Da’ (Extract 4.27). This solution in the story discussion impressed all the other children and made them laugh with him.

Although this story did not provide a solution for releasing anger, it mentioned that being angry did not help problem solving or make people feel good. Therefore,
when Miss Bella asked him, “Did you feel good after being angry?” Kelvin did not answer, but shook his head (Extract 4.27). After that, Kelvin came out with his humorous answer ‘Da La Da La Da’ as the solution to not be irritated. Although his answer looked like an unintentional joke, I perceived that Kelvin realised not only his anger, but also seriously thought about how to cope with such negative emotions and drew the three solutions in his worksheet later (Figure 4.7). This was because one of the three solutions was to listen to music, and it corresponded to the solution, ‘Da La Da La Da’ he shared after Miss Bella’s storytelling.

The interaction between Kelvin and the resilience-orientated story was imperceptible but profound. Through his drawing and oral narratives, as multiple voices, both indicated the credibility of my interpretation. Furthermore, through the teachers and his peers’ reminder in response to his three solutions, Kelvin made new meaning of perceiving win and loss by practicing his three coping strategies.

Making new meaning of win and loss

Winning a competition or game was initially the most important goal for Kelvin, but after the resilience-orientated story was told, and the solutions of dealing his anger were discussed and practiced in reality, Kelvin made different meaning of his interpersonal relationships and of his win and loss. Firstly, his interpersonal relationships with peers was benefited due to less tension as the length of Kelvin’s irritation was reduced by Miss Bella’s demonstration of listening to music “Da La Da La Da” (Extract 4.29). Not only Kelvin, but also the other children were taken advantage of this solution to let Kelvin calm down. Finding a practical and useful coping strategy improved Kelvin’s negative emotional response.

In addition to the new perspective of win and loss, Kelvin has shifted from a winner’s role to a loser through the resilience-orientated story, named “Win and Loss” (Extract 4.31). In this story, the winner was unhappy because he loses his best friend’s friendship (Appendix M). Despite that, Kelvin still believed that being a winner was good news. When Miss Bella asked the children to consider whether losing is bad news based on the story, Kelvin transformed his attitude from negative to positive. While his initial answer was bad news, Kelvin changed his opinion of the loser to a positive
perspective (Extract 4.31). This shifted his perspective of win and loss and as a result represented new meaning-making.

**Summary**

In Kelvin’s story of resilience, his competitive attitude certainly motivated his learning; however, the rewards of competition led to a negative reaction when he lost. Because Kelvin could not accept what he considered to be an unfair result of his perceived competitions that, for his classmates, were simply learning activities, his negative reaction was a risk to his interpersonal relationships. Through the resilience-orientated stories in relation to dealing with negative emotions and positive thinking, Kelvin adopted useful strategies for coping with his negative emotional reactions, and also made new meaning of winning and losing.

### 4.3 Countryside Preschool

Countryside Preschool is situated in the east of Taichung City and also affiliated with a public elementary school. To collect the data in Countryside Preschool, I had to drive around 30 minutes from Taichung City. As its location is close to The Central Mountain Range of Taiwan, agriculture and industry accounted for the majority of economic development in this district. In this geographic location, Miss Anny indicated that 70% of parents or caregivers at Countryside Preschool were blue-collar workers.

Table 3.1 shows Countryside Preschool consists of one class with two qualified teachers (Miss Anny and Miss Kelly), and one qualified educare giver (Miss Lisa). As Countryside Preschool was affiliated, the resource and spaces, such as a kitchen, playground, and health service were shared with the elementary school. The physical environment, its curriculum, and the selection of the resilience-orientated stories in Countryside Preschool are described. After the illustration of the classroom context, Timothy’s story of resilience is displayed.

*Physical environment*

As the focus of this study is on children’s narratives, I recorded them mainly in the context of the role-play centre (Figure 4.8), reading centre (Figure 4.9), and the group
discussion area (Figure 4.10). Table 4.2 illustrates Countryside Preschool timetable. In the free time for exploration, children could liberally choose different learning centres, such as a block centre, art centre, reading centre, role-play centre, etc., depending on where they wanted to play. However, when the teachers undertook the thematic curriculum, literacy and numeracy lessons, or storytelling time, children were assembled at the group discussion area.

Figure 4.8 Countryside Preschool role-play centre

Figure 4.9 Countryside Preschool reading centre

Figure 4.10 Countryside Preschool group discussion area

The highlighted areas of Table 4.2 are my data collection times. I participated in Countryside Preschool on Tuesday from 8 AM to 5 PM and Thursday afternoon from 2 PM to 5 PM for 16 weeks. Although children were picked up around 4 PM, I sometimes
had the chance to have informal interviews with both the participant’s parents and the three teachers after school.

Table 4.2
_Countryside Preschool Classroom Schedule_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:50-09:00</td>
<td>Free time for exploration in learning centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00-09:30</td>
<td>Outdoor activity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30-10:00</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Mandarin Phonetic Symbols</td>
<td>Mandarin Phonetic Symbols</td>
<td>Borrow books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td>Transition time</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00-14:30</td>
<td>Nap time</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30-15:00</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00-16:00</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Story time</td>
<td>Free time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Curriculum_

There was one theme implemented for the whole semester in Countryside Preschool, which was “My Family’s/Father’s Occupation.” The thematic teaching web is presented in Appendix N. The thematic curriculum was separated from teachers’ storytelling time, but the three teachers decided to create an independent time for the children to listen to resilience-orientated stories. As children’s resilience development changes over time, I observed and interviewed the participant preschoolers not only in the storytelling time but also in other curricula.

_Resilience-orientated stories_

The five topics of resilience-orientated stories included separation anxiety, sibling conflict, emotional issues, problem solving, and parent-child relationship. Although I chose 22 stories in total in relation to these five topics, Miss Kelly and Miss Lisa told 10 of these stories over 16 weeks at Countryside Preschool. These stories have been summarized in Appendix O.

Timothy’s narrative of resilience was presented. There are three sections of his story of resilience; descriptive narrative data, narrative interpretation and analysis, and a
summary, respectively. The narratives interpretation and analysis were guided by the narrative analytical framework in Chapter 3.

4.3.1 Timothy: From low learning motivation to engaging in teachers’ storytelling

Extract 4.33 Chating with Timothy (Interview 20150106BCT)

*Timothy* (was eating his afternoon tea.)

*I* “What do you like about preschool?”

*Timothy* (looked at me and said nothing. After two seconds, he smiled artfully.) “I only like to listen to stories.”

*I* “Why?”

*Timothy* “… (smiled artfully again. I know he doesn’t want to answer rather than he doesn’t know how to answer.)

*I* “Except storytelling, you feel preschool is boring and not as interesting as your TV, don’t you?”

*Timothy* “haha…” (He was laughing loudly and nodding his head.)

*Figure 4.11* Timothy’s worksheet– Solution of anger
Figure 4.11 shows one of Timothy’s significant worksheets after listening to the resilience-orientated stories. The topic of this drawing was a solution to how he could release his anger. Timothy drew the solution as him watching TV. His story of resilience is surrounded by his lived experience of the TV programmes that he watches.

**Timothy’s story**

Timothy was 5 years and 7 months old in September, 2014 when I collected his data. His physical appearance was healthy and his language competence was adequate with regard to expressing himself. Moreover, he also lived with his extended family, pertaining to his parents, grandparents from his paternal side, and his younger brother. Timothy’s grandparents played an important role as co-caregivers. His grandfather took him to preschool every day, and his grandmother cooked and looked after him. Timothy’s parents were sometimes unemployed, but when they had jobs, they worked in an unskilled and long-hour contract.

**Living with grandparents**

The relationship between Timothy and his grandfather was close. He insisted that his grandfather had to accompany him to Countryside Preschool every morning and pick him up in the afternoon.

Extract 4.34 Relationship with grandfather in Timothy’s interview (Interview 20141121 BCT)

I

“Timothy, do you know you are very lucky? (Timothy looked at me confusedly.) Your grandpa and brother accompany you to preschool almost every day.”

Timothy (was laughing for 2 seconds first and proudly answered me.) “If my grandpa does not take me (to school), I won’t come. I will cry loudly.”

I

“Don’t you like your dad or mum to come with you to preschool?”

Timothy “No. I just want my grandpa.”

I

“Why?”

Timothy (smiled again.) “I can’t tell you.”
This intimate relationship was because Timothy’s grandfather always fulfilled his wishes. For example, Timothy’s grandfather would buy his favourite toys, but also let him watch his preferred TV programs after school.

Extract 4.35 Relationship with grandfather in Timothy’s interview (Cont.)
(Interview 20141121 BCT)

I “Then, what do you do after preschool?”
Timothy “My grandpa takes me and my brother to a park to play after school.
If I ask him to buy toys for me, he will always say ‘Yes,’ but (Timothy’s voice suddenly turned from joy to weak) my mum and dad would say ‘No’ because they don’t have money.”

I “…..well, what kinds of toys do you like?”
Timothy “A lot. Transformers, cars models and cards, etc.”

I “WA… after preschool you have so many exciting things to do, don’t you?”

Timothy “I love watching TV and I have my own (TV). My grandpa lets me choose whatever I want (to watch).”

Timothy’s mother mentioned a similar relationship between Timothy and his grandfather. Furthermore, she also pointed out that Timothy’s grandparents provided great assistance in looking after Timothy and his brother when she and her husband were busy working. This help also continued through the times when they were unemployed.

Extract 4.36 Timothy’s mother’s informal interview (Interview 20141223BPT)

I “I saw you took Timothy to school those days. Is the grandfather doing well?”

Timothy’s mother “Yes, he is. I lost my job as the previous boss closed her business (a breakfast cafe shop). I don’t have to work in the morning, so since then I can send him to the preschool.

I “I see.”

Timothy’s mother “Our income is not very steady. His dad (Timothy’s father) just got the job as a delivery driver last month. We rely on
(Timothy's) grandparents a lot. When we are very busy, they (Timothy and his brother) can't see us (mother and father) because we go out before they wake up and when we get home, they are sleep.....Honestly, Timothy was very clingy towards his grandfather.”

As Timothy spent most of his time with his grandparents in his family lived experience, he had strong connectedness with his grandfather.

Timothy's media consumption

Timothy spent all his time after preschool watching TV and movies as well as on the weekend when his parents needed to work. His mother confirmed that Timothy spent at least six hours using technology, such as TV, computer games, a play station or game applications on a tablet. The content of his media consumption showed in his narratives and also his drawings.

Extract 4.37 Influence of the movie on drawing (Observation20141005BCT)

I (while Timothy was drawing, I asked him) “What is ‘Transformers’?”

Timothy (kept drawing when answering me) “I watched ‘Transformers 3’ last night.”

I “Have you seen all of the Transformers’ movies?”

Timothy (nodding his head said) “YES! I watched all the episodes many times.” (I omitted his narrative about the content of the movie.)

Penny (When Timothy was telling me about ‘Transformers,’ other children eagerly expressed their opinions on this movie.) We can draw ‘Transformers,’ but he (Timothy) draws better.

When Timothy was drawing in Figure 4.12, his narrative was completely related to the movie, ‘Transformers’, as stated above. He explained to me how the two parties fought in the movie and was excited when talking about this topic.
Another example of the media influencing his drawings and narratives was ‘Wolverine.’ As the thematic curriculum of different occupations introduces postmen, after the teachers and children visited a post office, Miss Kelly asked all the children to colour the characters (Figure 4.13) as they wrote a letter, and also to draw a picture as a gift to a randomly selected friend in the classroom. Timothy was assigned to send his letter to Grace, so he had to think of what to wish her as well as what to draw as a gift. Timothy had no difficulty in drawing tasks; however, he was stuck on this task and did not know what he could draw.

Extract 4.38 Thematic curriculum of drawing task (Observation20150114BCT)

Timothy  (frowned, looked at me and asked.) “What should I draw?”

I  (Half of the children in the classroom had finished the task, Timothy was still stuck.) “How about flowers?”

Timothy  (rolled his eyes at me.) “No way. I can draw that but I don’t want to.”

I  (stopped suggesting for two mins but he did not have any idea so I advised him) “A bear, doll, a cake, playground, etc.”
“...” (shook his head and rolled his eyes showing my ideas were bad.)

I (casually mentioned but I have my own purpose) “Well, how about ‘Wolverine’?”

Timothy “Oh YES!” (He did not refuse this suggestion but smilingly looked at me and spent around 4.5 mins on finishing Figure 4.13)

Timothy was struggling with what to draw instead of how to draw. He also refused when I suggested he should draw something girls may like. Apparently, he was keen on drawing what he liked, without considering both the topic the teacher gave and the girl’s (Grace’s) preference. However, his preference and interests were clearly hero images as portrayed in the media.

Dear receiver’s name:

I am very happy to write this letter to you, and I would like to tell you: “You are amazing because you can finish all the meal.”

I would like to give you a gift, which is...

Sincerely,
Writer’s name

Figure 4.13 Timothy’s drawing - Wolverine 20150114
One topic of the resilience-orientated stories was to help young children deal with their anger. Therefore, in the story discussion, Miss Lisa guided all children to think about how to cope with their anger, and asked them to draw strategies or methods on their worksheets. In Timothy’s worksheet (Figure 4.11) and narrative below, his strategy was watching TV.

Extract 4.39 Releasing his anger by watching TV (Interview20141127BCT)

Miss Lisa “What makes you not feel angry?” (Children eagerly raised their hands and shared their opinion.)

Timothy “When I feel angry or fight with my younger brother, watching TV is the best way to release my anger.”

From the hero images of Transformers and Wolverine, to watching TV as the solution to releasing Timothy’s anger, Timothy’s lived experience was immersed in the media.

*Low learning motivation in mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols*

Timothy’s low learning motivation was the major concern in this study. He was always late and looked sleepy when entering the classroom. Compared with his younger brother who was not yet enrolled, but always ran to the door first, Timothy was reluctant to come to preschool.

Extract 4.40 My reflection of Timothy’s learning (Reflection 20141125 BCT)

Timothy came to preschool very late (9:10 AM) today. As I observed, he does not have the time for exploration in various learning centres in the morning because he is always late. (…) Looking at the way he and his brother walk into the gate of the preschool provided a great contrast. His brother always runs ahead but Timothy’s footsteps displayed reluctance, and his facial expression was sleepy. Recalling back to his learning was nothing impressive. (…) He has not raised his hand to talk or actively engaged in learning activities, except his outstanding drawings.
Miss Anny has complained about Timothy’s late attendance to his mother. However, his mother pointed out that Timothy always watched TV or played games on a tablet until very late, so that he can not wake up early.

Extract 4.41 Teacher-parent communication (Observation 20141118BPT)

Miss Anny “It is a shame that Timothy has not played in the learning centre in the morning because he always attends late. Could you please let him come earlier? I asked his grandfather for this matter, but although he always says yes, there is still no change.”

Timothy’s mother (looked at Timothy waiting for his mother to go home.) “He always sleeps late because of watching TV, movies, or playing tablet games. Every time when I ask him to go to bed early, he doesn’t obey. In the morning, I have to work and leave home very early, so I don’t know what time his grandmother calls him. (…)

Miss Anny (looked at Timothy.) “Owing to a lack of sleeping time, you were late all the time. Timothy, you should not watch TV or play games too much. Are you listening to me? (…) I believe that if you have enough sleeping time, you will be more concentrated on your study. (Miss Anny turned to Timothy’s mother.) His learning of Mandarin Phonetic Symbols was very poor compared with others. (…)”

Miss Anny indicated that as a result of Timothy’s inadequate sleeping time, he did not attend preschool on time. This led to him missing out on the opportunity of playing in the free time for exploration. Additionally, Miss Anny thought that Timothy could not concentrate well on his study because of a lack of sleep.

Extract 4.42 Informal interview with Miss Anny (Interview20141113BTA)

I “What do you think about Timothy’s learning?”

Miss Anny “He is clever but in terms of learning, his performance is quite poor. Mathematics, Mandarin Phonetic Symbols…(…) I am really concerned about his low learning motivation. He hides
himself, has not been naughty and never wanted to raise his hand or to show off. Very passive. He only talks when we point to (…). It seems at preschool nothing he feels is interesting to him. (…) I wonder if he watches too much TV. He told me there are three TVs at home.”

Timothy’s poor learning performance in mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, and low learning motivation was also confirmed by Miss Anny. Timothy showed very little interested in learning.

Engaging in teachers’ storytelling

Miss Anny has complained about Timothy’s poor learning motivation to his mother; however, I notice that Timothy has selective learning motivation. For instance, Timothy has not actively raised his hand to engage in mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols lessons. By contrast, he actively asks some questions when listening to teachers’ storytelling.

Extract 4.43 Miss Lisa’s storytelling – ‘Goodbye, Grandma Erma’

(Observation 20141223BCT)

Miss Lisa (was displaying the story) “What do you see on the cover page?”

Children (were providing their answers eagerly. After Miss Lisa pointed out some children to respond to her question.)

Miss Lisa “OK. Put your hands down. Let’s see what this story is about.”

(She began the story.)

Timothy “Why are all the pictures (illustrations) black and white colours?” (He incidentally threw out a question without raising his hand.)

Because the core of ‘Goodbye, Grandma Erma’ is about the concept of death, the story’s illustrator used black and white photos to illustrate this story. None of the

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other children noticed the black-and-white genre in this picture book, whereas Timothy noted it immediately. After Miss Lisa’s storytelling, she pointed out her surprise at Timothy’s active question.

Extract 4.44 Miss Lisa’s informal interview (Interview 20141223BCT)

*Miss Lisa* (actively talked to me.) “Did you hear Timothy’s question although I did not have time to answer it?”

*I* “I did. I thought he was very sensitive to colours. Probably because he has a good talent for drawing.”

*Miss Lisa* “(...) Yes. But you know what surprised me? Timothy has never been so active in the classroom and engaged in a discussion. He raised his hand today.”

Timothy remembered the stories he has read and demonstrated his strong interests in them. An example of ‘I’ve Become A Fire-Breathing Dragon’ as one of the resilience-orientated stories showed Timothy’s resonance.

Extract 4.45 Miss Kelly’s storytelling – ‘I’ve Become A Fire-Breathing Dragon’ (Observation 20141204BCT)

*Miss Kelly* (just displayed the story without saying anything.)

*Timothy* (without raising his hand) “I knew it. I knew it.” (Others began to say so.)

*Miss Kelly* “Oh? Did anyone read this story?”

*Timothy* “Yes! I did.” (Some children also nodded their heads and some actively replied yes.) “Philip is a fire-breathing dragon because he was easy to get angry. He blows and the swimming pool’s water becomes hot spring water. Haha...(Timothy was laughing.)”

*Miss Kelly* “Would you like to share this story? Timothy?”

*Timothy* (shook his head but during Miss Kelly’s storytelling, Timothy interrupted the story a few times to show what he knew about it. (...) During Miss Kelly’s storytelling, Timothy also tried to squeeze to the front line.)

*Miss Kelly* (had to ask children to sit back to their positions.) “Why do you
Timothy enthusiastically talked about his reading experience of this story. In comparison to his low motivation in other learning activities, this active sharing demonstrated he was engaged in the teachers’ storytelling. Moreover, Timothy confirmed that the storytelling attracted his attention in Extract 4.33 as I observed at the beginning of Timothy’s story.

*Emergent writing through reading*

Although Timothy could draw well, as demonstrated by the content of his drawings (Figure 4.11, Figure 4.12 and Figure 4.13) and by his narratives (Extract 4.37, Extract 4.38, and Extract 4.39), they were mostly derived from the media he has watched at home. After Timothy engaged in an animated way with the teachers’ storytelling, the content of his drawing included his emergent writing in Figure 4.14.
Figure 4.14 Timothy’s worksheet – ‘The Fish We Eat’

Extract 4.46 Timothy’s narrative of his drawing (Interview 20141208BCT)

I (held his reading worksheet and asked Timothy.) “Tell me what this drawing is.”

Timothy “This (Figure 4.14) is a fish boat. The boat can catch so many fish. So, the fish we eat is from the boat.”

I “Interesting. How about this?” (I pointed to the English letter and number he wrote on the boat.)

Timothy (looked at me and laughed. He raised his voice and asked me.)

“You don’t know what it is?” (I shook my head.) “Every boat has its name.”

I “How do you know that?”

Timothy “The story says. I copied the name from the storybook.”
Timothy initially reproduced his mock handwriting which was imitated from the story which he read with his mother as part of the activity of ‘Parent-Child Reading’. Timothy’s narrative began to have story content rather than just the media.

**Narrative analysis and interpretation**

The narrative analytical framework guided an analysis of Timothy’s narrative of resilience. Hence, there were several focuses on the interpretation of Timothy’s story of resilience, such as Timothy’s drawing as one of the important multiple voices, the rich lived experience with his grandparents and the media, an active interaction with the teachers’ storytelling, and making meaning by engaging in reading.

*Timothy’s drawings as an important voice in his narrative*

I collected more than 15 of Timothy’s drawings during the thematic curriculum, the storytelling time, and Parent-Child Reading. Timothy’s drawings consistently corresponded to his narratives. For instance, in the free time for exploration, in the art center, Timothy drew the Transformers movie he watched and told me how the two parties fought with each other (Figure 4.12 and Extract 4.37). Moreover, his drawings could represent his narratives. In the previous Transformers example, Timothy’s peer praised his outstanding drawing of Transformers. Another example was to draw a solution of how a child released his anger after the storytelling (Figure 4.11). Without knowing Timothy’s narrative, this drawing showing his solution as watching TV, could be significant evidence of his lived experience. In this way, Timothy’s drawings represent an alternative voice in his narrative of resilience.

*Lived experience with grandparents*

As Timothy lived with his grandparents, he had very strong emotional connectedness with them, in particular his grandfather. The influence of living with grandparents on Timothy’s resilience development has both advantages and disadvantages. The initial benefit of living in an extended family with Timothy’s grandparents is the shared responsibility of looking after Timothy and his younger

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13 The Parent-Child Reading is an important activity, which children can borrow a storybook in the reading centre at preschool every Friday afternoon and return it every Monday.
brother. Timothy’s lived experience with his grandfather was that he was both good company and a gift provider (Extract 4.34 and Extract 4.35). Furthermore, as Timothy’s parents often had unskilled jobs, their employment was not stable (Extract 4.36). Therefore, his grandparents were not only co-caregivers, but also provided important financial assistance in maintaining the family’s living standards. These advantages strengthened the connectedness between Timothy and his grandfather which was a protective factor of his resilience.

On the other hand, there were two disadvantages of living with grandparents. Firstly, Timothy’s grandparents’ parenting style was to spoil the children. The notable example was that a few of the movies Timothy mentioned, Transformers, Wolverine, and Annabelle, were not on the general classification level; his grandparents however, did not prevent him watching them. Timothy proudly said “My grandpa lets me choose whatever I want to watch” (Extract 4.35). Additionally, Timothy’s grandfather spoiled Timothy by fulfilling his wishes. Timothy had learnt that if he asked his parents and grandfather to buy a toy, he would not get it from his parents.

Extract 4.47 Telephone interview with Timothy’s mother (Interview 20150531BPT)

I “Timothy is very close to his grandparents, isn’t he?”
Timothy’s mother “(...) My father in-law loves my two boys very much. He has never said NO to them, if they ask him something. Sometimes I punished Timothy, he would hide behind his grandfather. He is very kind, patient and permissive to the two grandsons.”

Although Timothy’s mother did not use the word ‘spoil’ to depict his grandfather’s parenting, she stated that “Timothy’s grandfather has never said NO” and was “permissive to the two grandsons.” I interpreted that Timothy’s grandfather treated Timothy in an overindulgent way because his grandfather always supplied whatever he wanted without proper guidance.

Secondly, Timothy’s parents might overly depend on his grandparents to teach Timothy independent life skills. As Timothy’s mother emphasized in Extract 4.36, when
she and her husband were busy working, they sometimes had inadequate time to interact with their sons. This led to a lack of time for his parents to teach independent life skills, especially Timothy’s irregular toileting issue. Hence, Timothy’s mother believed her parents-in-law should take this responsibility.

Extract 4.48 Telephone interview with Timothy’s mother (Interview 20150131BPT)

I “Have you been concerned about Timothy’s development?”

Timothy’s mother “(...) Timothy has serious constipation. I don’t have time to toilet train him. My parents-in-law (Timothy’s grandparents) did not help with this issue but they have more time to train Timothy’s toileting. (...) I have asked the three teachers at preschool to assist him but I don’t think they can do much about it.”

Timothy’s irregular toileting issue was not taught because his mother had no time and complained about how helpless her parents-in-law were in this regard. This issue may indicate that his mother was heavily reliant on his grandparents. Therefore, Timothy’s parents’ dependence on living with grandparents, and his grandfather’s ‘spoilt’ attitudes towards him were highly likely to be risk factors for Timothy’s resilience.

Lived experience with the media

Media exposure dominated Timothy’s lived experience and influenced the content of his drawings. The negative and positive impacts of Timothy’s media consumption on his resilience were inescapable. On the positive side, the media exposure stimulated and motivated his inherent drafting skills to a degree that impressed Timothy’s peers, for example his drawings of Wolverine and Transformers. In Extract 4.37, Penny mentioned that Timothy draws Transformers better than anyone else in the class. Additionally, after he drew Wolverine as a gift for Grace, I interviewed her about her perception of Timothy’s gift. Although she did not like Timothy’s gift, she did compliment Timothy on his drawing.
Grace’s perception of Timothy’s Wolverine drawing (Interview 20150114BCT)

I: “Do you like this (Wolverine) as a gift?” (I pointed to Timothy’s drawing of Wolverine.)

Grace: “No, I do not like this gift. I like Teddy Bears. I wish he could draw this. It’s OK. Mmm... Because he (Timothy) drew very well. So, I accepted.

Furthermore, taking advantage of the media to release his anger was a benefit to Timothy’s resilience development. This example showed in Timothy’s narrative (Extract 4.39) and his drawings (Figure 4.11). However, the use of the media brought negative influences on to Timothy’s resilience. Initially, the excessive utilization of the media affected his sleeping time and his punctuality with regard to getting to preschool on time. This might also influence his energy levels, and consequently his learning at preschool, and contribute to his low learning motivation which Miss Anny was concerned about (Extract 4.41 and Extract 4.42). In addition, the media Timothy consumed was inappropriate for his age, and his parents and grandparents did not control his viewing content and time (Extract 4.35 and Extract 4.41).

Active interactions between Timothy and the resilience-orientated stories

Timothy displayed no interest in mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols lessons his teachers noted with concern (Extract 4.42); however, he liked to listen to stories, which pointed to his demonstrated preferences for an alternate interesting and exciting reality (Extract 4.33). Timothy engaged in several story discussions, such as ‘Goodbye, Grandma Erma’ (Extract 4.43), ‘The Tunnel,’ and ‘I’ve Become A Fire-Breathing Dragon’ (Extract 4.45). When listening to the story, Timothy stared at the storybook and paid attention to details (Extract 4.43). Miss Lisa was amazed by his involvement during her storytelling time in comparison to his performance in other learning activities (Extract 4.44). Timothy even complained that he could not see the illustration of ‘I’ve Become A Fire-Breathing Dragon’ while Miss Kelly was telling the story. While Timothy’s mother already read this story with him during Parent-Child Reading, nevertheless he gave his full attention to this same story when it was read in
class (Extract 4.45). His low learning motivation was transformed during the teachers’ storytelling and story discussions. Hence, the interaction between Timothy, the teacher’s storytelling, and story discussions was active and positive.

**Appearance of emergent writing as new meaning-making**

Through Timothy engaging in the teachers’ storytelling and Parent-Child Reading, the content of his drawing was broadened from the hero images of the media to children’s storybooks. At the end of my data collection, Timothy’s drawing in Figure 4.14 as an example, has manifested his mock handwriting from the fish boat of the storybook, named ‘The Fish We Eat.’ The appearance of his emergent writing was a new milestone in his learning. As engaging in reading facilitated Timothy’s learning motivation, his interest in knowing the name of the boat was evident (Extract 4.46). This evidence indicated that his mock handwriting was meaningful despite him reversing some of the English letters. The meaning of his emergent writing might inspire his other learning activities.

**Summary**

Timothy’s lived experiences were mainly related to the content of the media he consumed and the interaction with his grandfather. These experiences involved risk and protective factors in Timothy’s narrative of resilience. Although Timothy’s low learning motivation in Mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols was a concern to his teachers, through listening to fascinating stories, Timothy seemed to engage in the teachers’ storytelling and story discussions. As a result of his active interactions with the story, Timothy’s emergent writing appeared in his drawing, which was his meaning-making for his story of resilience. This meaningful mock handwriting was an indication of Timothy’s learning progress.

### 4.4 Coast Preschool

Coast Preschool is located in the west of Taichung City, close to Taichung harbour and is affiliated with a public elementary school. To go to Coast Preschool, I had to drive approximately 40 minutes from the city to the countryside. While Coast
Preschool had two classes, which consisted of two classrooms and one function room, all the resources and space, such as a kitchen, a playground, and health service were shared with the affiliated elementary school.

Table 3.1 indicates that there are two qualified teachers (Miss Sunny and Miss Betty) in Dolphin Class, where I observed and studied. The description of the physical environment pertains only to this classroom, and is followed by its curriculum, and then the selection of the resilience-orientated stories. Finally the stories of resilience of Victor and Ian are described and analysed.

*Physical environment*

The space of Dolphin Classroom was divided into three areas, specifically three learning centres, a teaching area, and the two teachers’ workspace. Similar to Urban Preschool, I used a video recorder to help with my observations mainly in the context of the role-play centre (Figure 4.15), reading centre (Figure 4.16), and the group discussion area (Figure 4.17). Table 4.3 illustrates Coast Preschool’s timetable as its daily routine. In the free time for exploration, children could choose freely which learning centres to go to, such as a block centre, art centre, reading centre, and role-play centre, depending on where they wanted to play. However, when the teachers undertook the thematic curriculum, literacy and numeracy lessons, or storytelling time, children were assembled at the group discussion area.
As shown in Table 4.3, the duration of my data collection in Dolphin Class was on Monday afternoon from 2 to 5:20 PM and Wednesday from 8:30 AM to 5:20 PM over 16 weeks.

Table 4.3
Coast Preschool Classroom Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:30-09:00</td>
<td>Free time for exploration in learning centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00-09:30</td>
<td>Mandarin Phonetic Symbols</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30-10:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:30</td>
<td>Thematic curriculum</td>
<td>Lunch time</td>
<td>Transition time</td>
<td>Transition time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:30</td>
<td>Lunch time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td>Transition time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-14:30</td>
<td>Nap time</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-15:00</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00-16:20</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum**

There were four themes taught in Coast Preschool over a semester, a bicycle, night market, peanuts, and Lunar New Year, respectively. One theme was taught per month. One example of the thematic web is shown in Appendix P. As shown in Table
4.3, the thematic curriculum was not integrated with the storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in Dolphin Class. Despite that, I still observed the preschoolers not only during the storytelling time, but also during their thematic curriculum and other lessons.

**Resilience-orientated stories**

Resilience-orientated stories refer to diverse topics that help the preschoolers in this study to develop their resilience. The implementation of the stories was depicted in Chapter 3. In Dolphin Class, the selection of the four topics of resilience-orientated stories included emotional issues, problem-solving skills, interpersonal relationships, and self-assurance. Although I chose 25 stories in total in relation to these four topics, Miss Sunny and Miss Betty told only 13 of these stories over 16 weeks. The stories told have been summarized in Appendix Q. As I only presented Victor and Ian’s stories of resilience in this thesis, just seven of the resilience-orientated stories are mentioned here.

Victor and Ian’s narratives of resilience are presented respectively. The structure of each story of resilience begins with descriptive narrative data, followed by narrative interpretation and analysis, and finishing with a summary. Victor and Ian’s narrative interpretations and analyses were guided by the narrative analytical framework outlined in Chapter 3.

**4.4.1 Victor: From a trouble maker to impressive storyteller**

Extract 4.50 My observation reflection of Victor (Reflection 20140929CCV)

*Victor’s screaming, crying and tantrums come and go quickly. His emotional expression is very direct and instant. Because of that, his interpersonal relationships are a concern.*
Figure 4.18 illustrates Victor folding paper intently. However, a few minutes after I took this picture, he had a tantrum (Extract 4.51). His persistence of doing something repetitively caused some difficulties in the teacher’s classroom management and his interpersonal relationships.

A story of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome

Victor participated in this study at the age of 5 years and 10 months in September, 2014. Victor’s physical appearance was healthy. Although Victor had a speech problem in articulation, it was not severe. When he was not agitated or irritated, his speech was adequate and comprehensible. He was diagnosed with intelligence and developmental delay when he was 4, but also Asperger’s syndrome at the age of 5.

Additionally, Victor’s mother was a nurse whose professional medical discipline and awareness allowed for an early intervention. For this reason, Victor’s developmental delay was identified early on and his speech pathology started in a timely manner.

Asperger’s disorder was recognized in DSM-IV in 1994 but has merged into Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by American Psychiatric Association in 2013. However, Victor’s diagnosis report still shows Asperger’s disorder. This study uses Asperger’s disorder as the original data Victor’s parents provided to me.
Victor’s father had a stable job, so family financial security was adequate. Victor lived with his extended family, including grandparents as co-caregivers from his paternal side, who looked after him and his younger brother. Victor was the first child in his family and has a younger brother without any developmental delay.

\[A \text{ vicious circle of interpersonal relationships – behavioral feature of Asperger’s disorder and poor emotional expression}\]

Victor’s emotions were sometimes unstable at preschool, particularly in two circumstances. First, when Victor’s persistent behaviour conflicted with Miss Sunny or Miss Betty’s instructions, he would react negatively, such as kicking and crying loudly.

Extract 4.51 Victor’s negative reaction (Observation 20141015CCV)

\begin{verbatim}
Victor (was folding a paper while Miss Betty had already asked children to go to the functional room as it was time to take a nap. Victor was the last one in the classroom.)

Miss Betty (reminded Victor.) “Please come to take a nap. Victor.”

Victor “… ” (No response to Miss Betty.)

Jack (After two minutes, Jack went into the classroom and saw Victor was still here. Jack shouted.) “Oh! Teacher! Teacher! Victor is still folding a paper.”

Victor “… ” (No response to Jack as well.)

Miss Betty (walked into the classroom and looked at Victor.) “Look. Victor. You can fold your paper after napping, but not now.” (Miss Betty attempted to stop Victor’s play by taking his paper.)

Victor “Auuuuughhh...!!”(screamed loudly.)

Miss Betty (insistently asked him to go to sleep.) “Everyone goes to rest now.” (When Miss Betty said that, Victor started crying loudly, got up and was walking around but did not go to the rest room (which is the function room). Miss Betty let Victor cry alone for a few minutes.)

Victor “heh...neh...”(During Victor’s crying, a few children went to the toilet. They saw Victor was crying. After releasing his tantrum, Victor went to the rest room in the end.)
\end{verbatim}
After Victor had these agitated reactions to the attempted thwarting of his persistent behaviour that occurred repeatedly, Extract 4.51 is an example of how some children avoided playing with Victor or being with him in a group. As his tantrums sometimes scared some girls, they ceased working with Victor in team activities.

Extract 4.52 Joyce was scared of Victor’s tantrums (Observation 20141022CCV)

Victor (After having afternoon tea, Miss Betty taught the class an English song. To practice the song, Miss Betty asked the children to find their friends as a team. Victor stood still, and meanwhile most of the children already found their team partners.)

Miss Betty “Who has not found a partner yet?”

Victor (did not respond to Miss Betty, but he turned to Allen and asked him to be his partner by using body language. Victor touched Allen’s arm and pointed to himself and Allen.)

Allen (shook his head.) “No. I am with Luke.”

Victor (No response to Allen.)

Miss Betty (asked again.) “Have you all found a partner yet?”

Allen (pointed to Victor and shouted.) “Miss Betty, Victor does not have a partner.”

Miss Betty (looked at Victor and asked him.) “Who do you want to sing a song with?”

Victor (was still silent but pointed to Joyce.)

Joyce (saw Victor pointed to her, she shook her head and told Miss Betty.) “I don’t want to be with him (Victor) in a duet. I am so scared of him.”

Victor (When Miss Betty tried to match Victor with another child who did not find a partner, Victor cried out.) “I want to be with her (Joyce).”

The second example of Victor’s negative emotions being triggered was whenever he did something different from others in a group activity; his peers would make a complaint about him to Miss Sunny or Miss Betty. Victor would have an exaggeratedly agitated emotional expression. Because of that, his peers would tease him
or laugh at him. Victor’s reaction would be either to shout at his peers or be physically aggressive towards them, such as hitting their arms or kicking their belongings.

Extract 4.53 Victor’s reaction after a peers’ complaint (Observation 20141002CCV)

**Victor** (was playing blocks quietly while all the children were in the classroom making robots with the recycled boxes and newspapers.)

**Allis** (reminded Victor.) “Victor, you should make your robot now.”

**Victor** (did not even look at Allis but heard what she said.)

**Tom** (saw it and started to complain loudly.) “Teacher! Teacher! Victor is in the block centre. He isn’t making his robot.”

**Victor** (jumped out and agitatedly shouted.) “No. No. I am not.”

**Allen** (looked at Victor in the block centre and complained loudly as well.) “Look! Teacher! He is playing with the blocks.”

**Victor** (After Tom and Allen made complaints against Victor, Victor started stamping his foot and murmured loudly something I could not understand. A few seconds later, James walked to Victor and tried to bring him back to his seat, Victor hit James’s arm once. When the children saw Victor’s aggression, they all shouted “Teacher! Victor hit James”) “I didn’t. I didn’t.” (After saying this, Victor started crying loudly.)

**Miss Sunny** (intervened this event.) “Everyone go back to your desk and do not look at Victor now.” (Miss Sunny walked towards Victor who was crying loudly.)

Because Victor’s reactions to his peer’s complaints were always extremely agitated, those of them who had seen Victor’s crying, screaming and kicking were scared of him. This was a vicious circle of his poor interpersonal relationships because the more irritation Victor showed, the less likely it would be his peers would make friends with him. The fewer friends he had, the fewer chances Victor had to improve his social skills.
**Strong learning motivation and high academic performance in Mandarin Phonetic Symbols and mathematics**

Victor’s Asperger’s syndrome did not affect his learning. His mother mentioned his favorite books were about science and math equally. Victor’s learning motivation in Mandarin Phonetic Symbols and Mathematics lessons were as high as his achievement in these classes. As Victor was highly engaged in these lessons, he even could point out a mistake Miss Betty intentionally made in a mathematics assignment.

Extract 4.54 Victor’s performance in a Mathematics lesson (Interview 20141029CCV)

*Victor*  “...” (raised his hand to show he wanted to talk when Miss Betty was explaining the mathematics homework. So, Miss Betty did not allow him to talk.) “**Teacher! Teacher!**” (As Victor raised his hand but could not get a chance to talk, he called Miss Betty loudly and caught her attention.)

*Miss Betty*  (After a while, Miss Betty replied.) “What do you want to tell me, Victor?”

*Victor*  (pointed to Miss Betty’s PowerPoint presentation and corrected her mistake.) “That is wrong. 2 + 7 = 9, so you cannot tick this one.” (The question asked to tick the answer of the addition which was shown as 10 in the Powerpoint presentation.)

*Miss Betty*  (looked at her PowerPoint again and changed her answer.) “Yes, I made a mistake in the question number 5 in my PowerPoint. Look at it again. Because 2 + 7 = 9, the answer is not 10. We should not tick this answer, Victor. Well done.”

Miss Sunny and Miss Betty have mentioned that Victor had outstanding calculating skills and when they taught mathematics, Victor would complete the assignment more effectively compared with other learning activities. However, Victor’s reading and language learning were difficult to assess because he did not show his understanding of reading and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols in a way I comprehended during the initial three months of my data collection.
Extract 4.55 My reflection of Victor’s case (Reflection 20141126 CCV)

Should I keep following up Victor’s case? I found it so difficult to get him to talk... Given his limited oral expression, how can I get to know his thoughts about the stories?

I almost gave up on Victor as a research participant because of his lack of writing and oral narratives, although I was very confident about my observations of him. On much closer observation of Victor during his class, although I had little of his narrative to analyse, I discovered a connection between Victor’s reading behaviour and his negative emotions.

*Reading as a solution to transfer negative emotions*

I had an opportunity to observe Victor’s emotional transformation more than twice within a month. After his emotional outbursts occurred, I noticed that if Victor moved to the reading centre to read, he would calm down and looked like nothing had happened before. After discovering this relationship between his reading and negative emotions, I interviewed and confirmed with Miss Sunny and Victor’s mother individually, about this reading strategy as a solution used by him to transfer his negative emotional expression.

Extract 4.56 Miss Sunny’s interview – Parent-teacher cooperation (Interview 20151224CTS)

* I: “Do you talk to Victor’s parents about his behavioural issue at preschool?”

* Miss Sunny: “Yes. I often complain about Victor’s behaviour problems to his mother. (Miss Sunny was laughing after saying that.) We (Miss Sunny, Miss Betty and Victor’s mother) have a good parent-teacher relationship because we (Miss Sunny and Miss Betty) need to know what her expectation is for us to teach Victor with Asperger’s disorder, and what we can do to help Victor adjust to preschool life, and she is keen to cooperate with us. (...) Recently,
Victor’s irritation and behaviour problems have got worse again, we also talked to his mother and we always try to find a solution together. Now, we know that we should leave more space and time for Victor to calm his emotions and we allow him to do something different if necessary, particularly when he insists on doing something individually during the group time. (...) He looks very calm when reading, so if I see he is irritated I will allow him to stay in the reading centre. (...)”

Due to Victor’s behaviour problems, the two teachers have discussed the situation with Victor’s mother to search for some solutions. Miss Sunny agreed that Victor needs an individual space when he felt agitated, so she allowed Victor to stay in the reading centre if necessary. Furthermore, Victor’s mother confirmed that she had discussed with Victor about the consequences of his reactions and possible solutions. However, reading was Victor’s own idea.

Extract 4.57 Victor’s mother’s interview (Interview 20150425CPV)

I “I observed that Victor likes reading and when reading, his emotions calm down.”

Victor’s mother “Yes, my son loves reading books on science and mathematics at home...(...) I didn’t know reading helped to calm his irritability but I talked with him about how to deal with his negative emotions at preschool after Miss Sunny told me about his problems.”

I “Did you and Victor come up with some strategies after that discussion?”

Victor’s mother “Well, basically I asked him to do something else to transfer his bad feelings, like anger, irritation, etc. I told him that his preschool friends would not want to play with an angry Victor. He told me some children laughed at him, which made him angry. Then, I suggested to him that if someone says something you don’t like, can you please do something else and ignore that person? He agreed. I further talked to the teachers to give him some space and time, because I know
when my son is upset, you just need to leave him alone. Don’t pay too much attention to him when he is agitated (...) I am so pleased that he found that reading can switch off his irritation.”

A unique way of understanding storybooks by imitating the teachers’ storytelling strategies

Reading was an effective intervention to transfer his negative emotions but to learn Victor’s way of understanding the resilience-orientated stories took more than three months. As Victor had rarely responded to my questions when reading storybooks, I could not utilize the same method that I used to interview the other participant children. I wrote a few times in my reflection diary regarding how frustrated I was at being unable to get Victor to talk about his understanding of the story he read (Extract 4.55).

The topics of an interpersonal relationship and self-assurance in the resilience-orientated story were selected for Victor. The four books, ‘Nobody Likes Me’, ‘Thank You’, ‘You Are Special’, and ‘Pick Me’ were all read by Victor at home with his mother, as I confirmed, but when I asked Victor about the stories he did not talk to me about them. As Victor went to the reading centre often, I tried to talk to him while he was reading or after he finished. I almost gave up on Victor as a research participant until he began to show his understanding of his reading by imitating the questions Miss Betty or Miss Sunny asked during the storytelling time.

Extract 4.58 Victor’s reading (Interview 20141224CCV)

I (quietly sat beside Victor who was reading ‘I Can Do It’ in the reading centre. I did not talk as I knew he would not answer during his reading but I observed his visual movement on the storybook to see whether he read the content or the illustrations most.)

Victor (While I was observing him, he suddenly turned the story back to the page where the story character, Rose was in a crowded theme park. Suddenly, Victor asked me a question.) “Do you know where Rose is?”
I (was very surprised that he actively talked to me about the story. To learn how well Victor comprehended the story, I pretended I did not know the answer.) “Rose is here.” (I pointed to the wrong character in that page.)

Victor “…” (shook his head showing my answer was wrong.)

I “So, do you know where Rose is?”

Victor (did not answer but proudly pointed to Rose.)

In the storytelling of ‘I Can Do It’, “Do you know where Rose is?” was Miss Sunny’s question when she turned to the page where the illustration shows Rose is in a theme park and waiting to buy a ticket. I discovered this connection between Miss Sunny’s storytelling and Victor’s question when I reviewed the storytelling recording. This type of conversation in Victor’s interviews appeared a few times in terms of different stories.

Extract 4.59 Victor’s reading (Interview 20150107CCV)

I (After lunch, Victor was reading “Who Is The Bravest” in the reading centre. I waited for a few mins until he turned to the last page of the story and asked him a question.) “What are you reading?”

Victor (did not look at me but answered.) “No, who do you think is the bravest?”

I (Victor did not answer my question; conversely, he asked a question. As I got used to his narrative style, I played the same role as a fellow reader and gave the wrong answer back to him.) “I think it is the bird.”

Victor (still no eye-contact.) “No. You don’t know (the answer)??”

I “Is it not the bird? Oh. I thought the bravest was the bird.”

Victor “No, not the bird. I am not going to tell you.”

I (begged Victor to tell me the answer.) “Oh, please, please, tell me please. Who do you think is the bravest?”

Victor (was laughing.) “Haha… Everyone is the bravest.”
Prior to my conversation with Victor, as described above, this story was told by Miss Sunny. In the story discussion, Miss Sunny asked “Who do you think is the bravest?” Some children believed that the bird was the most courageous one, whereas some argued that the bravest should be the frog, the snail or the rat in their competition of fearlessness (Appendix Q). Miss Sunny pointed out to the children that all four of the animals are brave because they challenged themselves in some way, so she commented at the end of the story that “Everyone is the bravest.” Victor’s narrative by reading the resilience-orientated story imitated the teachers’ storytelling strategies.

**Turning point of interpersonal relationships by impressive storytelling**

After the teachers’ storytelling was undertaken in the classroom for approximately four months, Miss Sunny encouraged the children to tell a story to the rest of the class. Victor raised his hand to be the first storytelling volunteer during storytelling time. Victor told the story, ‘Your Fault’, which the two teachers had not told in the class, but only placed in the reading centre. Over the next ten minutes, Victor read literally and fluently. After his storytelling, he asked his classmates three questions. This proved that Victor not only demonstrated his literal reading competence, but also comprehended the story because he could ask questions related to the story and knew the correct answers when his classmates’ answers were wrong.

Extract 4.60 Victor’s storytelling ‘Your Fault’ (Observation 20150112CCV)

**Miss Sunny**  “Victor wants to be our first volunteer storyteller. Victor can pick one story from our reading centre.”

**Victor**  (walked to the reading centre and selected “Your Fault”. He held a microphone that Miss Sunny passed to him.)

**Miss Sunny**  “Please tell us your name and the name of the storybook”

**Victor**  “My name is Victor. (paused and laughed because the microphone sounded strange.) Today I want to tell a story, called “Your Fault.” Don’t laugh. Don’t laugh.” (When the children heard that Victor’s voice amplified by the microphone, they found it was weird so they were laughing. Victor was also laughing as he has never heard his voice using a microphone.)

**Miss Sunny**  “OK. If you cannot stop (laughing), I am going to take the
“Microphone away.”

**Victor** (started telling the story with very quick speed.) “*All the animals in a forest are gathering near the only pond. They find there is no water in the pond now.*”

**Miss Sunny** “Slow down, Victor. We cannot hear you clearly.”

**Victor** (After Miss Sunny’s reminder, Victor retold again.) “*All the animals in a forest are gathering near the only pond…(omitted. The story went for 7 minutes and 22 seconds.)*”

**Miss Sunny** “OK. Now, you can ask three questions. What is the first question?”

**Victor** “Why is the flea angry with the elephant?”

**Miss Sunny** “Who knows the answer?”

**Daniel** “Because the elephant drinks all the water in the pond.”

**Miss Sunny** (asked Victor.) “Is that correct?”

**Victor** “Yes, the answer is correct. You can have one sticker.”

**Miss Sunny** (passed one sticker to Daniel) “Well done. What is the second question?”

**Victor** “Why is the hippo angry with the rhino?”

**Allen** “Because the rhino drinks all the water in the pond”

**Victor** (crossed his arms and shook his head.) “**Dong! Wrong.**”

**Mike** “Because the rhino does not acknowledge his fault.”

**Victor** (crossed his arms and shook his head again.) “**Dong! Wrong.**”

**Tom** “Because the rhino is covering the hippo’s eyes.”

**Victor** “Yes. The rhino covered the hippo’s eyes so the hippo kicked the salt bag in the pond.”

**Miss Sunny** “Well done. Do you have the third question?”

**Victor** “Yes, if someone answers correctly this question, he/she can get two stickers.”

After Victor asked three questions, Miss Sunny asked Victor a few questions and praised him for his outstanding reading competence.

Extract 4.61 Victor’s storytelling “Your Fault” (Cont.) (Observation 20150112CCV)
**Miss Sunny** “Thank you for Victor’s storytelling. I would like to ask, why did you want to tell this story that I have never told before? Because?”

**Victor** “Because the story is nice.”

**Miss Sunny** “Which part of the story plot is attractive to you most?”

**Victor** “All of them. All animals.” (He pointed to all of the animals on the cover page.)

**Miss Sunny** Which parts or sentences in the story impress you?”

**Victor** (played with the stickers Miss Sunny gave him. A few seconds later, he pointed to the name of the cover page.) “Your fault.”

**Miss Sunny** “Thank you Victor again. He is awesome, isn’t he? OK. Who is next (to be a volunteer storyteller)?” (No one raised his/her hand, so Miss Sunny asked again.) “You don’t have to be like Victor who reads literally. You can just tell what you see in a story.”

**Shelly** (sat beside me and murmured with another boy on her right hand side.) “Victor is so smart. He can read all the characters.”

With Victor’s remarkable storytelling, Miss Sunny’s positive reinforcement apparently changed most of the children’s perception of Victor’s competence. The girl, Shelly, even complimented Victor saying he was so intelligent because he could read the whole story. Victor’s interaction with his peers was always full of conflicts (Extract 4.51 and 4.53) and difficulties (Extract 4.52), but now they admired his reading ability. Not only his peers, but also the two teachers’ perception of Victor was positively changed.

**Extract 4.62** Miss Sunny’s interview (Interview 20150112CTS)

* I (I interviewed Miss Sunny after Victor’s storytelling.) “What do you think of Victor’s storytelling?”

**Miss Sunny** (slightly raising her voice responded) “To be honest, I didn’t expect that Victor could read literally. His storytelling was very impressive. This is because he did not display his reading competence much in the classroom as far as I can recall. I knew his mathematics was really good, but his reading competence
and skill were completely unexpected.”

I: “How do you think other children view his storytelling?”

Miss Sunny: “Did you notice after Victor’s storytelling that none of the children wanted to tell a story? I guess everyone was impressed by Victor’s performance. After that, I asked a few children to be volunteers and they all refused because they saw that Victor’s reading was amazing and could not compare well to him. So, I had to tell them that you don’t have to know how to read literally.”

I: “haha…Yes. I did notice that.”

Miss Sunny: “You were standing at the back so you did not see Ian’s face when Victor was reading the story.” (Ian was my second research participant who was very talkative and likes reading as well.) Ian stared at Victor like he has never seen the real Victor before.

In Miss Sunny’s interview, she admitted that she had underestimated Victor’s reading competence, and she perceived that some children viewed Victor differently after this incident.

Narrative analysis and interpretation

The implementation of the narrative analytical framework in Victor’s narrative of resilience focused on the integration of multivoiced narratives, the preschool lived experience of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome, imitative interactions between the teachers’ storytelling strategies and his understanding of resilience-orientated stories, and an inspiration in his meaning-making of demonstrating his reading competence.

Multivoiced narratives constructed a resilience story of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome

A resilience story of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome was (re)constructed by multiple voices, including his narratives, his mother’s voice, Miss Betty and Miss Sunny’s voices, his peers’ voices, and my observations and interpretive voices. There were several reasons for involving multivoiced narratives in Victor’s story of resilience.
Firstly, Victor’s short narratives, resorting to his emotional expressions and body language, were embedded in multivoiced contexts. For example, when children exposed Victor for not participating in group activities to the teachers, he would scream, cry, be aggressive, and refuse to comply (Extract 4.51, 4.52 and 4.53). The content of his short narratives and such negative reactions could possibly be interpreted as Victor’s lack of interpersonal and interaction skills. This would be expected because of the difficulties associated with ASD that Victor is diagnosed with. Without understanding the whole context of other children’s complaining voices against Victor, his solo voice could be interpreted in a different way as an emotional disorder, rather than poor interpersonal relationships.

Secondly, the consistency of multiple voices supported my interpretation of Victor’s narratives. As I observed Dolphin Class for only one and half a days a week, I doubted my interpretation of Victor’s performance, behaviour, and oral narrative might be affected much by subjectivity. Additionally, perhaps Victor performed well when it was not my observation time. However, Victor’s vicious circle of interpersonal interactions was also confirmed by the two teachers (Extract 4.56). Another example was Victor’s narratives in his volunteer storytelling and question-and-answer skills in the storytelling time (Extract 4.60 and Extract 4.61). Compared to Victor’s other narratives, I interpreted this outstanding storytelling performance as an important turning point for his interpersonal relationship. Miss Sunny supported my interpretation by acknowledging that “Victor’s storytelling was very impressive” (Extract 4.62). Moreover, as Victor’s peer, Shelly’s admired voice was evident that “Victor is so smart because he can read all the characters” (Extract 4.61).

Thirdly, multivoiced narratives demonstrated the similarities between Victor’s narrative in his reading and the teachers’ storytelling strategies. Without analyzing the teachers’ storytelling texts, the imitating relationship of the teachers and Victor’s storytelling and question-and-answer skills would not have been revealed. As a result, multivoiced narratives not only compensated for Victor’s narratives but also enhance the credibility of the construction of his story of resilience.
Victor’s preschool lived experience with Asperger’s syndrome

Victor’s lived experience at preschool was full of challenges and influenced by his Asperger’s syndrome. From the teachers’ perspective, his persistence of doing something, one of Asperger’s features, led to challenges in classroom management. For example, during what was scheduled as nap time, Victor continued to fold paper after being told to stop by the teacher (Extract 4.51). Victor’s persistence with his activity caused his peers’ to complain to his teacher. Due to his non-compliance, Miss Betty had to step in. In Miss Sunny’s thematic curriculum of an art learning activity, Victor was playing with building blocks while all the children were making their robots (Extract 4.53). Apparently, Victor’s negative emotions and aggressive behaviour occurred after his peers protested about his non-compliance with the teachers instructions. These conflicts between the two teachers’ instructions and Victor’s non-compliance, and his persistence with his chosen activity strengthened teacher-parent cooperation aimed at finding a solution (Extract 4.56). When the teachers allowed time and space in a group activity for Victor to release his negative emotions, the number of such intense emotional expressions was reduced.

Victor’s preschool lived experience was close to being at-risk of being bullied in the first few months of my data collection. Due to Victor’s poor social skills, his peers were ganging up on him and as a result provoking him into tantrums by complaining about him to the teachers (Extract 4.51 and Extract 4.53). After his peers witnessed Victor’s provoked temper tantrums a few times, some of his peers began to make fun of his agitated reactions by teasing or laughing at him. Inevitably this provoked a further angry response from Victor creating a vicious circle in his interpersonal relationships, which in turn made it more difficult for him to make friends.

However, Victor’s lived experience was markedly altered as the result of his outstanding competence in reading. Since the teachers have learnt how to respect Victor’s individual emotional needs, the reduced number of his irritated reactions broke the vicious circle of his interpersonal interaction with his peers. On being given an opportunity to show his reading competence by storytelling (Extract 4.60), Victor built a positive perception of Asperger’s syndrome as demonstrated by Miss Sunny and his peers’ compliments (Extract 4.61 and Extract 4.62).
Imitative interactions between the teachers’ storytelling strategies and Victor’s understanding of resilience-orientated stories

I was frustrated by Victor’s apparent lack of understanding of the resilience-orientated stories I selected specifically for him, as the interaction between his reading and such stories was not manifested during the first three months of my data collection (Extract 4.55). This was not only because Victor had not interacted with anyone during his reading, but also because I could not understand the way in which he was using them or his comprehension of the stories. For instance, over 10 minutes I sat beside Victor who was quietly reading a book, and suddenly he asked me a question (Extract 4.58). My reflection on the question Victor asked was a unique and valuable insight to understand how he learnt from the story, and demonstrated his comprehension of the story. The former reflective thought was quickly discovered because “Where is Rose?” as a concrete question had a solid and correct answer. However, making definitive conclusions on the basis of this short narrative without the context was difficult.

After this time, Victor started talking during his reading and I have reread these short narratives several times. To prolong Victor’s narrative, I either provided incorrect answers, or used his questions and then asked him back (Extract 4.59). When Victor answered “Everyone is the bravest” I recalled suddenly that I had heard this comment before. Then, when comparing and contrasting Victor’s narrative during his reading with the teachers’ storytelling and story discussions, I realized the similarity of the questions and replies that Victor had shown me. Victor imitated the teachers’ storytelling skills as his way of understanding of the story, which was unique. The interaction among the teachers’ storytelling, story discussions, and his understanding of these stories was formed with his imitation.

Inspired by Victor’s reading competence as meaning-making

The change as a result of Victor’s volunteer storytelling was impressive to the teachers, his classmates, and me as a researcher. Victor created a positive perception of his interpersonal relationships, which demonstrated his use of his reading competence in resilience-orientated storytelling to realize new meaning-making.
However, it was unlikely that Victor’s reading competence could considerably progress so much within one semester. There were two reasons to explain why Victor’s reading competence was overlooked by the two teachers. Initially, Miss Sunny pointed out that “I didn’t expect that Victor could read literally. He did not perform his reading competence much in the classroom” in her interview (Extract 4.62). Although Victor’s competence in mathematics was well recognized by the two teachers, he had never shown his reading competence. Secondly, Victor’s mother confirmed that Victor was an independent reader in her interview. She was very proud that Victor’s father and she enjoyed participating in the Parent-Child Reading activity every weekend when Victor would read a story he borrowed from the preschool.

The neglect of Victor’s reading competence led to curriculum reflection and my consideration of interviewing preschool children. The curriculum arrangement in Dolphin Class was inflexible and dominated by the teachers. Therefore, there was inadequate time and space for Victor to demonstrate his reading competence. In other words, the first volunteer storytelling time acted as an effective platform that enabled Victor to demonstrate his reading competence.

Extract 4.63 My reflection of Victor’s case (Reflection 20150107 CCV)

(…) Victor’s storytelling is inspiring. It makes me reflect on a few things. Why didn’t I realize his amazing reading competence? Why didn’t the two teachers realize that either? Why did Victor have this big change? (…) today’s volunteer storytelling was a new lesson plan. It created an opportunity for Victor. Without this storytelling activity, this chance, Victor was not be able to impress us. (…) I remember I almost gave up on Victor due to the lack of narratives I was able to collect, and the way he acted and answered was difficult to understand in the absence of the correct context. I even thought that was due to his Asperger’s syndrome. Now, I realize that I am used to expecting a ‘logical’ conversation in an interview. The majority of preschool children can understand my questions and answer them logically; however, for Victor I have to turn my head around to understand him. (…)

In terms of my reflection on Victor’s data collection, Victor inspired me by putting me in his shoes to review the unique way he understood stories. Compared with
the other participant children, Victor’s difference was not only Asperger’s syndrome, he also has found a unique coping method for his condition and demonstrated his superior narrative skills, which is a remarkable and laudable effort and achievement on his part.

**Summary**

In Victor’s story of resilience, he was initially at-risk of being considered a trouble maker because his persistence to do what he wanted was a challenge to classroom management for the teachers, and his excitable irritated reactions were viewed as inappropriate by children and teachers alike which led to the vicious circle of his interpersonal relationships. On being given an opportunity to demonstrate his reading competence, Victor’s volunteer storytelling as his positive lived experience at preschool impressed all of us and changed his peers’ perception of him. Moreover, multivoiced narratives, embedded in multivoiced contexts, assisted me with understanding Victor’s short narratives but also enhanced the credibility of the construction of his story of resilience. Victor’s story also inspired me to review the meaning-making of his volunteer storytelling.

The second resilience story in Dolphin Class was Ian who overcame his fear of darkness, which is presented in the next section.

### 4.4.2 Ian: “Being a friend with them”: Surmounting his fear of darkness

Extract 4.64 My observation of Ian (Observation 20141020CCI)

“I am so afraid of being in the dark. When my dad and mum turned off the light downstairs at night, I was scared that monsters would come out.” Ian shakily described his fear experience in front of his peers and Miss Sunny.
Figure 4.19 pointed to the origin of Ian’s story of resilience. Understanding Ian’s fear of darkness and coping with it became an important goal in order to cultivate his resilience.
Ian’s story

Extract 4.65 My reflection of Ian’s fear (Reflection 20141013CCI)

What is the difference between “worry” and “fear”? When Ian shared his “worry”, which was to walk downstairs at home at night time, I felt he was talking about his fear. Or maybe worrying accompanied his fear? (...) Ian is an interesting boy I should follow up.

Ian was 5 years and 4 months old when participating in this study in September 2014. Ian’s physical appearance was healthy and attractive, and his language competence was adequate. Ian lived with his extended family, including his grandmother from his paternal side, his parents and his older twin brother. Ian’s grandmother, as an important co-caregiver, cooked and looked after the twins daily as Ian’s parents were busy with their work.

My observations showed that Ian was always energetic and talkative in Dolphin Class. With these characteristics, the collection of Ian’s narratives was productive. Ian’s story of resilience began with how he became my research participant, his lived experience of fear, and then how he overcame his fear through resilience-orientated stories.

Incidental discovery of Ian’s fear of darkness through teacher’s storytelling

Ian’s initial narrative of his fear was revealed during the discussion of Miss Sunny’s storytelling of ‘Wemberly Worried’ (Appendix Q). The purpose of telling this resilience-orientated story was to reduce preschoolers’ separation anxiety at the beginning of the semester. However, as Miss Sunny extended the discussion of the children’s worry from their first time attending preschool to a broader range of fear in their lived experiences, Ian voluntarily shared his fear of darkness during the group discussion.

Extract 4.66 Ian’s initial narrative of his fear during a story discussion (Observation 20141013CCI)

Ian (raised his hand and waited for Miss Sunny’s permission to talk.)
Miss Sunny “OK. Ian. Would you like to share your worry or fear?
Ian (nodded his head.) “At night time, my daddy and mummy turn off
the light (downstairs). I am, I am very worried that monsters are
coming.”
Miss Sunny (clarified Ian’s words.) “You worry that the monster will come
because the light??...what is it?”
Ian (corrected Miss Sunny’s words.) “No. It is downstairs.”
Miss Sunny “What happened with the downstairs’ light?”
William (Interrupted for Ian.) “Very dark (in Taiwanese).”
Ian “Very dark (in Mandarin).”

When Ian repeatedly mentioned his fear of darkness and monsters, I observed
some children showed their consonance. I therefore selected the five resilience-
Do It’, and ‘No Fear’ in order to build resilience for coping with such fear (Appendix
Q). Through telling these resilience-orientated stories, Ian not only indicated his fear of
darkness in his narrative (Extract 4.66), but also demonstrated it in his drawings (Figure
4.19) and body language. For instance, prior to telling ‘The Dark,’ Miss Sunny closed
the curtains and turned off the light in Dolphin Class in order to create a dark
atmosphere. Although the classroom was visible, I observed that Ian was shaking when
a few children started making ghostly sounds. When noticing Ian’s trembling, Miss
Sunny asked Ian about his feelings. Ian’s response was similar to Extract 4.66.

In the story discussion of ‘The Dark,’ Miss Sunny asked all the children to draw
their concerns and fear on their worksheets. Ian’s drawing (Figure 4.19) corresponded to
his narrative in response to his fear experience.

Extract 4.67 Ian’s draw-and-tell interview (Interview 2014020CCI)
I “Ian, what did you draw?”
Ian (pointed at his drawing at the red door, stairs, and downstairs in turn in
Figure 4.19.) “I don’t want to go downstairs at night.”
I “Why?”
Ian “Because evil demons and ghosts are there.”
I (pointed to his whole picture.) “Where?”
Ian (used the black colour and quickly scribbled on the bottom of the paper to represent the evil.) “Here.”

It was noticeable that Ian’s fear of darkness was prompted at first by monsters, and expanded after the story discussion to supernatural beings like evil demons and ghosts.

**Ian’s fear of monsters, aliens and UFOs**

I had a few of Ian’s narratives in relation to monsters. In Ian’s narrative, he indicated the source of his fear derived from the cartoon TV programme he watched at home.

Extract 4.68 Ian’s fear of monsters affected by the media (Interview 20141121CCI)

I (after nap time, children were preparing to eat their afternoon tea. Ian was sitting in the reading centre but was not reading. I sat beside him and talked to him.) “... (omitted my greeting to Ian.) Ian, last time you told me you believe there are monsters in the world. Is that real?

Ian “...” (nodded his head but was silent.)

I “Have you seen them before?”

Ian (nodded his head again.) “They (monsters) are real.”

I “Where did you see them?”

Ian “I watch a cartoon. There are good robots and bad robots. I like to watch them fighting.”

I (tried to clarify his opinion of robots and monsters.) “You watch the TV cartoon and you like robots. Do you like monsters?”

Ian (was urgent to explain.) “No. I said that I like good robots but I don’t like monsters. They (monsters) are all bad. The good robots would fight with monsters. And save the Earth.”

Austin (was listening to our talk and suddenly he responded to Ian’s interpretation of monsters in the cartoon.) “There are no monsters on the Earth.”

Ian (raised his voice against Austin.) “You didn’t watch the cartoon for a
long time, so you don’t know there are real monsters on the Earth.”

I “Are you sure that the monster is also on the Earth? Maybe they are just in the cartoon.”

Ian (insisted on his opinion.) “No. They (the monster) are not just in the cartoon.”

This extract indicated that the monster and robots Ian either liked or felt fear of came from a cartoon he watched. Another of Ian’s narratives showed his fear of aliens and UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) when he watched the news on TV.

Extract 4.69 Ian’s fear of aliens and UFOs (Interview 20141210CCI)

I (saw Ian reading an astronaut’s storybook in the reading centre.)
“What are you reading? Ian?”

Ian (looked at me and pointed to a ‘comet’ on the astronaut book to me.)
“Look! This is a meteor. It is very beautiful.”

I (did not correct him.) “Have you seen it before?”

Ian (was thinking for a second.) “Yes, I saw ‘Doraemon’ First episode, first episode...mmm...the first episode is him, is Nobita Nobi who wished to the sky when he saw the meteor. But it passed very fast.”
(Then, Ian turned to the next page and pointed to Mars.) “This is the star of aliens.”

I “Really? Is that the star of aliens?”

Ian (nodded his head and repeated.) “Yes, I...mmm... Aliens are real.”

I “Do you really believe that?”

Ian (Looked at me agitatedly.) “You don’t watch the news so you don’t know they (aliens) are real.”

I (confirmed what I heard from Ian.) “Who doesn’t watch the news?”

Ian (pointed to all his classmates.) “A lot of children don’t know about astronauts, UFOs and aliens.”

I (clarified what he said.) “You mean that if children don’t watch the news, they won’t know there are aliens, don’t you?”

Ian (confirmed what I repeated by nodding his head.) “Yes, but there are

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15 Doraemon is a famous Japanese cartoon which is interpreted in Mandarin. Nabita Nobi is one of the main characters in the cartoon.
real aliens. They live here (Ian pointed to Mars which was the previous one he showed me).”

I “Are you afraid of them (aliens)?”

Ian (shook his head and quickly answered.) “No. I was afraid of them before. No, because now I know they are not living on the Earth.”

Ian’s fear of darkness regarding monsters, ghosts, demons, robots, aliens, and vampires was influenced by these cartoon TV programmes.

Ian’s sense of fear and lived experience with grandmother

A narrative I collected from Ian and Sean (Ian’s twin brother) in the reading centre showed their lived experience with their grandmother. One afternoon, Sean was rereading ‘I Can Do It’ with Ian quietly sitting beside him.

Extract 4.70 Ian’s lived experience with his grandmother (Interview 20141222CCI)

I “Sean, do you believe there are ghosts and monsters in your house?”

Sean “…” (nodded his head slightly.)

I “Why?”

Sean “If you don’t behave, you will be taken away by the ghosts.”

I “Really?”

Ian (interrupted our conversation.) “My grandma told us (Ian and Sean) that if we don’t eat vegetables, greedy ghosts would come to take us away. If you don’t go to sleep at night, ghosts would bring you to an island. Because all the children not going to bed stay there…you know?...and then you would never come back again.”

In this narrative, Ian was frightened by his grandmother’s ghost story. Ian’s mother’s interview indicated that Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling was diverse.

Extract 4.71 Ian’s mother’s telephone interview (Interview 20150327CPI)

I “… you talked about Ian’s grandma telling stories. What kind of stories does she tell?”
Ian’s mother “…I know my mother-in-law (Ian’s grandma) uses tales to get my twins to behave. And many folktales tell about ghosts in the darkness but she also tells some folk religious stories as role models.”

I “Yes, I heard that from Ian and Sean about ghost’s stories. But what do you mean by a folk religious story?”

Ian’s mother “Well, like the story of Buddha.”

Through Ian’s grandmother’s ghost and Buddha storytelling, her stories were intended to scare them to behave but also intended to provide role models for the twins.

Problem-solving strategy of Ian’s fear of evil spirits - Being a friend with them

Ian’s fear of darkness related to evil spirits was changed through the use of the resilience-orientated stories, ‘I Can Do It’ in particular (Appendix Q). The story provided alternative problem-solving strategies for young children to deal with their fear by kissing monsters and ghosts and by making friends with them in a haunted house in a theme park. Through Miss Sunny’s guidance in the story discussion, Ian imitated one of the positive solutions as he decided he might make friends with ghosts if they were not too bad.

Extract 4.72 Ian’s narrative in the discussion of ‘I Can Do It’ (Observation 20141215CCI)

Miss Sunny “What would you do if you were Rose? Would you kiss monsters and ghosts? Ian?”

Ian (immediately shook his head.) “No way. I don’t want (to kiss ghosts).”

Miss Sunny (asked again.) “What would you do?”

Ian “mmm…” (he smiled.) “I don’t know.”

Miss Sunny “You think about it and I will come back to you. OK?”

Ian (murmured. I could not hear him) “I … I might … friends …”

Miss Sunny “Sorry, what did you say?”

Ian “If they (ghosts) are not too bad, I… I think we can be friends.”
After this discussion, through the draw-and-tell interview technique, Ian told me how he might cope with his fear of uncertainties in the dark. Figure 4.20 illustrated a ghost on the right of the paper, a monster on the left and Ian in the middle. Ian drew himself with exaggerated hands and fingers and a smiley face because he wanted to shake the ghost and monster’s hands as friends.

Figure 4.20 Ian’s worksheet from storytelling – ‘I Can Do It’

Extract 4.73 Ian’s draw-and-tell interview (Interview 20141215CCI)

Ian (talked to me when he saw I was looking at him.) “This is a triangle monster (on the left). This is myself. And I am drawing a ghost. No feet. Because they can fly.”

I “What are they? (I pointed to several triangles with Ian himself in the middle.)”

Ian “mmm… My hands.” (He put down his colour pen and shook his fingers.)

I “I see. Your monster and ghost look smiley. Are they nice?”

Ian “I think some monsters are good like… mmm like (those in) the story I
After drawing a strategy for overcoming his fear on the worksheet, Ian considered being friends with good monsters that he felt afraid of previously. His thoughts on these monsters changed as Ian began to separate monsters from all evil to allow for some to be good ones.

**Narrative analysis and interpretation**

The implementation of the narrative analytical framework in Ian’s narrative of resilience focused on his lived experience of fear and darkness. In Ian’s narratives of fear, his projective interactions with resilience-orientated stories and his moral judgement creating the new meaning of being resilient are interpreted here. At the end of Ian’s narrative analysis, my subjectivity in collecting Ian’s narrative of fear experiences is addressed.

**Ian’s lived experience of fear**

Ian’s fear was unexpectedly revealed when Miss Sunny told ‘Wemberly Worried’. As the teacher extended the topic of “worry” to “fear” in this story discussion, Ian narrated his fear of darkness (Extract 4.66). In his narratives, darkness represented different supernatural beings, such as monsters, evil demons, ghosts, aliens, UFOs, and non-supernatural beings like bad robots. These resulted in Ian’s fear of darkness that were derived from two sources in his lived experience.

The first source recognised was watching cartoons and the news on TV, which influenced his belief of monsters, robots, aliens, and UFOs (Extract 4.68 and Extract 4.69). Ian insisted that these were real on the Earth, while he also indicated that he saw them in the cartoon. Apparently, Ian confused the reality with the fantasy world shown in the cartoons. In Extract 4.68, Ian noticed that one child did not believe in the existence of these supernatural beings; however, he blamed that child for not watching the cartoon. Furthermore, in Extract 4.69, Ian reinforced his opinion of the existence of aliens and UFOs because his evidence was based on his lived experience, namely the...
astronomical news he watched. This experience became his astronomical knowledge, and was applied to his reading of a book about an astronaut. Such reading experience was also associated with his lived experience of watching Doraemon cartoon which showed meteors. Hence, although meteors were not comets, when looking at an illustration showing a long tail of a comet in the astronaut’s book, Ian reflected on the Doraemon cartoon.

Secondly, Ian’s fear of supernatural beings was further affected by his grandmother. As Ian lived with his grandmother in an extended family, his grandmother as a co-caregiver took advantage of storytelling as a strategy of her parenting in order to get Ian to behave (Extract 4.70). The strategies of his grandmother’s storytelling were both frightening, and encouraging through learning from religious role models.

Projective interactions with resilience-orientated stories

Ian’s projection to the resilience-orientated story was due to the teachers’ storytelling for two reasons. The first reason was the teachers always created a storytelling environment and asked projective questions. For instance, prior to the storytelling of ‘The Dark’ the two teachers closed curtains so the dark ambience of the classroom was evocative of the story. Moreover, in the story discussion of ‘I Can Do It,’ Miss Sunny asked an ‘if’ question as a hypothetical question, “What would you do if you were Rose?” (Extract 4.72). This question led Ian to project himself into the story.

The second reason was several of the resilience-orientated stories I selected corresponded to Ian’s lived experience of fear. For example, the story content of ‘The Dark’ was almost the same as Ian’s first narrative related to his fear in the story discussion of ‘Wemberly Worried’ (Extract 4.66). Another story Ian resonated with was ‘No Fear’ because it described various sources of fear and different monsters and ghosts, which related to Ian’s narratives of supernatural beings. Because of these similarities between the resilience-orientated stories and Ian’s lived experience, and the use of the teachers’ storytelling strategies as above, Ian was able to adopt a solution provided by ‘I Can Do It’ to overcome his fear.
Making meaning by developing good and bad judgement

The initial exploration of Ian’s lived experience of fear revealed that Ian’s belief that monsters, robots, ghost, evil demons, aliens and UFOs were real was a result of the influences of media that he watched and his grandmother’s stories. When I further questioned Ian about his fear of these supernatural beings, it appeared from several of his narratives that he believed there were probably good and bad amongst these objects of fear (Extract 4.69, Extract 4.72, and Extract 4.73). The first example Ian narrated was the good and bad robots he explained about in a cartoon (Extract 4.69). In this narrative, Ian liked good robots because they could fight with bad robots. Apparently, he disliked bad robots and felt the same about monsters as Ian mentioned “…I don’t like monsters. They (monsters) are all bad. The good robots would fight with monsters.”

Another instance was ghosts as the bad spirits and Buddha as the good role model in stories told by Ian’s grandmother in order to elicit desired behaviours from him (Extract 4.70). Ian was taught that if he was not well behaved he could expect unpleasant consequences. For example if he was a picky eater or did not go to bed on time, ghosts would take him away forever. Consequently in Ian’s mind his bad behaviour was associated with bad outcomes involving ghosts.

Lastly, Ian adopted the story character’s solution of making friends with the supernatural beings as his method to overcome his fear. He nevertheless, provided an important condition to being friends, which was that these supernatural beings should not be bad (Extract 4.72 and Extract 4.73). As Figure 4.20 showed that the monster and ghost on each side of Ian were smiling, he eventually believed that some monsters were good revealing this in his narratives. Although Ian’s judgement was also affected by the content of the media he watched and his grandmother’s storytelling, he made his personal meaning of overcoming his fear of the supernatural beings by being friends with those that were good.

Possibility of reinforcing Ian’s narrative of fear experiences

Ian’s narratives in relation to his fear experience may be indirectly influenced and reinforced by my data collection in Dolphin Class. Ian was talkative and always
keen to share his opinion and to respond to the two teachers’ questions in the classroom. When actively engaging in each resilience-orientated story and its discussion, he had more opportunities to talk in public. Moreover, Ian liked to be filmed when I used the video recorder. Therefore, when I enquired about his fear and supernatural beings, his exaggerated body language and tone looked like a performance rather than a natural narrative.

Extract 4.74 My reflection of Ian’s fear (Reflection 20141210CCI)

Ian’s narratives were always very vivid and reinforced by his body language and dramatic intonation, which I really enjoyed when I interviewed him. However, today, when Ian exaggeratedly and agitatedly pointed out “You don’t watch the news so you don’t know ...,” I had a reflective thought. I wondered if Ian was intentionally performing his narrative in this dramatic way. Called “playing to the camera”? (…) Is that because he liked to perform when he was filmed? Or I let him feel that he has to say something which corresponds to my expectation in order to be recorded? Did I have that subjective expectation?

My similar interview questions in relation to Ian’s fear, and video recordings as the method I used to collect his narratives probably reinforced the expression of his fear. This might have affected my interpretation of the extent of Ian’s fear as a risk factor of his resilience development.

**Summary**

Ian’s story of resilience began with his lived experience of fear in relation to supernatural fantasy beings and darkness. Through the use of a resilience-orientated story, Ian was able to project himself into the story. This projective interaction with the story provided a good solution for Ian to begin to conquer his fear of supernatural beings, which was by making friends with them. Through the story discussion, Ian developed his good and bad judgement of monsters, ghosts and robots as his new meaning-making. According to my observations, Ian’s moral judgement was highly likely influenced by the media he watched and his grandmother’s parenting style.
4.5 Summary

In this findings chapter, the five stories of resilience are individually presented. Each narrative of resilience comprises three sections, a descriptive story, narrative analysis and interpretation, and a summary, respectively. These five narratives of resilience all involve multiple voices, the narrators’ lived experiences, their interactions with their peers, their teachers’ storytelling related to the resilience-orientated stories, and with the collection, analyses and descriptions of the contexts with respect to the development of children’s resilience being performed by me as the researcher. These five stories of resilience represent diverse illustrations of resilience in storytelling and how that can build resilience in at-risk children; and take into account their unique contexts and relationships with others.

In Urban Preschool, Howard’s resilience was viewed as the understanding of his parents’ divorce, while Kelvin’s resilience was to deal with his anger issues after losing a competition. In Countryside Preschool, Timothy manifested his resilience by engaging in learning activities through teachers’ storytelling. In Coast Preschool, the resilience story of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome showed he was an impressive storyteller while he was deemed a trouble-maker in the classroom. Ian’s story of resilience interwove his fear of darkness gleaned from the lived experience of his grandmother and the media with the resilience-orientated stories. He eventually overcame his fear by making friends with supernatural beings that were the sources of his fear.

The next chapter outlines findings relevant to the second Research Objective. It explores the influential elements on these preschoolers’ resilience development and attempts to understand the influential nature of socially and culturally-based interactions through the lens of BEST. The five preschoolers’ narratives of resilience will be analysed as a whole with the focus on these influential elements on the development of their resilience.
Chapter 5: Findings of RO2: Sources of Resilience

5.1 Overview

Through the lens of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (BEST), this study aims to explore the lived experience of preschoolers’ resilience when they engage and interact with teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in the three public preschools in Taiwan. In order to achieve this aim, the following two objectives are explored in Chapter 4 and 5.

RO1: Explore preschoolers’ narratives of resilience when they interact with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories and engage in story discussions.

RO2: Explore the content of children’s narratives to identify some influential elements and interactions between the children and their influential ecologies on the resilience development through the lens of BEST.

An exploration of the children’s narratives of resilience (RO1) was presented in the previous chapter, whereas this chapter aims to explore RO2. In Chapter 4, the five individual narratives of resilience were depicted, interpreted, and analysed by using the narrative analytical framework, based on Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis. In this chapter, BEST is incorporated with Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis as a theoretically thematic framework, in order to identify influential elements and interactions on the development of children’s resilience. The interactions between individuals and the elements embedded in their ecologies were revealed in the five children’s narratives. The focus of the analysis in this phase is shaped by microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems. The structure of this chapter is framed by BEST across the five individual narratives.

5.2 Influential Elements in BEST

The influential elements on the five preschoolers’ resilience development in this study were identified and categorized in Bronfenbrenner’s individual level and the five
systems in accordance with BEST. The analysis of these elements is presented for each level with a table.

### 5.2.1 Individual level

Bronfenbrenner explained that a study at an individual level includes three aspects: demand, resource, and force characteristics (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). Their definitions have been detailed in Chapter 2. According to this, Table 5.1 shows five participants’ influential elements on their resilience at an individual level.

**Table 5.1**

*Influential Individual Elements on the Five Children’s Resilience Analysed by BEST*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Levels</th>
<th>Demand characteristics</th>
<th>Resource characteristics</th>
<th>Force characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>+Average intelligence</td>
<td>+Supportive family resource</td>
<td>-Bursts into tears and unstable emotions +High learning motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin</td>
<td>+Average intelligence</td>
<td>+Supportive family resource</td>
<td>•Competitive +High learning motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>+Average intelligence</td>
<td>+Supportive family resource</td>
<td>-Low learning motivation in Mathematics and Mandarin Phonetics Symbols -Late attendance at preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>-Developmental delay at the age of 4 -Asperger’s disorder -Unclear articulation when agitated +Average intelligence</td>
<td>+Supportive family resource</td>
<td>+Strong learning motivation and curiosity in language and math +Outstanding reading and math competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>+Average intelligence</td>
<td>+Supportive family resource</td>
<td>+High learning motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“-”: Risk factors; “+”: Protective factors; “•”: Both risk and protective factors; “N/A”: Not applicable; “Not evident”: An element might influence an individual’s resilience but there was a lack of evidence.

Regarding demand characteristics, the majority of participants have a healthy physical appearance and average intelligence, which are protective factors in their resilience development. However, although Victor was not diagnosed with any intellectual disability, Victor had developmental delay. When he participated in this
study, his diagnosis of Asperger’s syndrome was viewed as a risk factor of him being bullied. This was because of the typical features of Asperger’s disorder, for example poor social interactions with others, a lack of compliance with the rules of normal social behaviour in class, and being aggressive and irritated when he was not allowed to pursue his preferred activity (Extract 4.51, 4.52, and 4.53).

In addition to resource characteristics, the five participant children’s individual family resources were explored in this study. All of the children had supportive family resources, whether they grew up in single-parent, nuclear or extended families. In this finding, except for Kelvin, the others had extra support from their grandparents. Even though Howard lived with his single mother, his grandparents from his maternal side always came to look after him. The extended family plays a significant role in supporting these young children’s resilience. As this family resource overlapped a family element at a microsystem level, it will be further explored in that level also.

Moreover, individual learning motivation as one of Bronfenbrenner’s important force characteristics was an aspect in evaluating the five preschoolers’ resilience. The vast majority of participant children demonstrated their high learning motivation in preschool learning activities. For instance, Miss Bella and Miss Cindy complimented Howard on his engagement of most learning activities (Extract 4.2), as well as Victor, with Asperger’s syndrome, who demonstrated his strong learning motivation by actively engaging in mathematics and language lessons (Extract 4.54). High learning motivation has been viewed as a protective factor in resilience literature in Chapter 2, while Timothy’s low motivation in the majority of his learning activities was regarded as a risk factor (Extract 4.40 and 4.42).

5.2.2 Microsystem level

A microsystem not only refers to the physically closest interpersonal relationship between an individual and his or her surroundings, most commonly including family members, school and peer groups, but also represents the most influential system on early childhood development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). With this definition of the microsystem, influential elements on the five preschoolers’ resilience development emerged from their narratives and were identified in the microsystem. These included
their families, parents and their expectations, grandparents and their parenting styles, single mother’s colleagues, preschool teachers, cram school teachers, and therapists for Victor’s Asperger’s syndrome. Table 5.2 illustrates a summary of influential microsystem elements on Howard, Kelvin, Timothy, Victor and Ian’s resilience development.
Table 5.2
*Influential Microsystem Elements on the Five Children’s Resilience Analysed by BEST*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microsystem Levels</th>
<th>Family (parents, siblings)</th>
<th>Extended family (grandparents)</th>
<th>Preschool (peers, teachers, curriculum)</th>
<th>Cram schools</th>
<th>Therapists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Parents’ divorce</td>
<td>+Alternative caregivers and support after divorce</td>
<td>+High attendance rate +Connectedness with peers and teachers +Positive learning atmosphere +Comforting Howard’s emotions by storytelling and reading storybooks</td>
<td>+Enjoys playing the piano after school</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No communication about the divorce to Howard +Connectedness with mother +Financially stable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>+High attendance rate +Connectedness with peers and teachers +Positive learning atmosphere +Practice social and problem-solving skills</td>
<td>- Overused competitions and reinforcement +Built Kelvin’s confidence on numeracy and literacy</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- High expectation of Kelvin’s academic performance +Connectedness with parents +Financially stable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>- Financial instability (unstable employment) - Reliant on grandparents’ help +Connectedness with parents</td>
<td>•Grandparents’ parenting style +Co-caregivers +Connectedness with grandfather</td>
<td>- Poor learning outcome of Mathematics and Mandarin Phonetics Symbols +Positive, warm and caring atmosphere +High attendance rate +Engaged in teachers’ storytelling</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsystem Levels</td>
<td>Family (parents, siblings)</td>
<td>Extended family (grandparents)</td>
<td>Preschool (peers, teachers, curriculum)</td>
<td>Cram schools</td>
<td>Therapists</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>- Working long hours</td>
<td>+Co-caregivers</td>
<td>- Poor interpersonal relationship with peers</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>+Improvement of his oral articulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Connectedness with parents</td>
<td>+Connectedness with grandmother</td>
<td>+ Releasing unstable emotions by providing personal space and time</td>
<td></td>
<td>+Joyful experience with therapists in hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Financially stable</td>
<td></td>
<td>+Positive, warm and caring atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+High attendance rate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+Created a storytelling opportunity to show his reading competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>+Financially stable</td>
<td>+Grandmother’s parenting style</td>
<td>+Positive, warm and caring atmosphere</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Encouraged art performance</td>
<td>+Co-caregiver</td>
<td>+High attendance rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Connectedness with parents</td>
<td>+Connectedness with grandmother</td>
<td>+Provide diverse views of fear and solutions through storytelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“-”: Risk factors; “+”: Protective factors; “•”: Both risk and protective factors; “N/A”: Not applicable; “Not evident”: An element might influence an individual’s resilience but there was a lack of evidence.
Families, parents, and grandparents

The five children’s lived experiences demonstrated a strong bond with their families, and therefore their resilience development was directly influenced by those they lived with. From the perspective of family structures, there were three types of families revealed in this study, Howard’s single-parent family, Kelvin’s nuclear family, and Timothy, Victor and Ian’s extended families.

Howard and his single mother had very strong connectedness with each other. For instance, as his mother had never missed out on Howard’s important events in Rabbit Class, such as an annual School Sports Day, a Moon Festival celebration, the Winter Thanksgiving party, and a learning performance in the end of the semester, I observed Howard’s interaction with his mother during these events. Howard and his mother often kissed and embraced each other. In the last of Howard’s mother’s interview, she mentioned that “I sometimes feel he is just very considerate of me as he would not upset me by asking me ...” (Extract 4.21). Hence, Howard and his mother’s overt displays of affection, and his consideration of his mother’s feelings demonstrated the strong bond between them. This family connectedness was a protective factor as indicated in Chapter 2 Literature Review.

However, living in a single-parent family for Howard could be a risk factor of his resilience for two reasons. Firstly, Howard’s mother observed that his negative emotional expressions increased after he visited his father (Extract 4.21). Howard’s mother did not know how to explain “divorce” to him, as she thought that Howard would not understand the meaning of divorce (Extract 4.20). Without an explanation of his parents’ divorce, Howard’s narrative showed that he was confused by his parents not living together, and did not know why his mother did not come on a family trip with his father (Extract 4.9). Consequently, the second reason was that Howard’s confusion over his parents’ divorce may have led to his frequent tearful outbursts over minor matters at preschool, and be an indicator of unstable emotional expression. In this regard, a risk factor of Howard’s post-divorce adjustment might occur because Howard’s parents did not communicate their separation to him.
Apart from the five participants’ strong connectedness with their parents, the parents as influential elements also significantly affected their children’s development. For instance, the parents were responsible and worked hard to offer their children better lives and education opportunities. Howard, Kelvin, and Victor’s parents sent them to cram schools in order to learn extra curricula. The parents in this study generally played a positive influential factor; however, Kelvin’s parents’ had high expectations for his academic performance, which was a concern.

In Kelvin’s mother’s second interview, she reflected her high expectation for her two boys, and recognized her response to her sons’ scholastic performance as alternative reinforcement. When Kelvin performed well, parents would be pleased and praised his performance, whereas when he failed, his parents pushed him to try harder.

Extract 5.1 Kelvin’s mother’s expectation (Interview 20150121APK)

I
“According to my observation report that I sent to you, I mentioned that Kelvin likes competitions and he seems to care about his win/gain and/or loss in the competition. What do you think about this?”

Kelvin’s mother
“Thank you for providing this observation. Honestly, I was surprised that Kelvin's competitive attitude might influence his interpersonal relationships. After reading your report, I asked Kelvin about his cram school and I saw the reward cards, and I realized that I did something very similar to the teacher at cram school. I did not use stickers at home but I do compare his older brother with Kelvin very often. Because his brother’s academic performance is always a concern to me and my husband, I always said that ‘Why are you not like Kelvin who studies very well’ in front of both brothers. It probably indirectly reinforces Kelvin’s need to be competitive. Kelvin knows we (my husband and I) do value their academic performance because when they show their good results, we are very happy and praise them. Conversely, if they fail, we will ask them to work harder to get a good result next time so they can be number one.”

I
“Mmm…”(nod my head to show I am listening.)
Kelvin’s mother

“\mbox{189} \mbox{189} \mbox{189} \text{"I have to say we expect them to succeed in their academic achievement. We are so afraid of their performance lagging behind others so we send them to cram schools after school and even sent them before they enrolled in preschools. I remember when they were 2 or 3 years old, we took them to expensive lessons for intelligence development (potential development) twice a week, and we bought flash cards. You know? Flash cards that they could practice with at home."}”

Kelvin’s mother expected that her two sons’ academic performance should be the best in their classes. This expectation may reinforce Kelvin’s competitive attitude. Another unique parental expectation was found in Victor’s case. Because of Victor’s Asperger’s syndrome, he was supposed to have additional educational support. However, Victor’s mother expected that her son’s early developmental delay would eventually catch up to the other children of the same age.

Extract 5.2 Victor’s mother’s interview (Interview 20150425CPV)

I

“Miss Sunny told me that there is a free speech pathology service for preschoolers who have speech delay issues but you rejected it in the first year.”

Victor’s mother

“(…) Because I did not accept the fact that my son had developmental delay. I thought his development was slower rather than delayed, and I am working in a hospital, I have seen a lot of children who could catch up to their developmental norm after two or three years. I mean they might be behind the developmental scale now, but after a few years their development would be similar to others. So, in the beginning I didn’t want to acknowledge my son was ‘special’ or different.”

Apart from the influence of parental expectations, Timothy’s parents’ unstable employment was a concern as a risk factor (Extract 4.36). With the unstable family income, they relied on Timothy’s grandparents to look after Timothy and his younger
brother. However, living with grandparents in an extended family resulted in both negative and positive impacts on preschoolers’ resilience.

In terms of an extended family, the grandparents were an influential element on the four preschoolers’ resilience development in this study. On the positive side, Timothy, Victor and Ian all lived with their parental grandparents and had very strong connectedness with them. Their grandmothers cooked for their families and looked after them when their parents were busy working. Grandparents as co-caregivers shared the responsibility of grandchildren’s care with their children, which was an important protective element.

Although Howard’s maternal grandparents did not stay with them, they lived close by and became important alternative caregivers to support his single-mother family. Howard also had a good relationship with his grandparents as he enjoyed his maternal grandparents’ company when doing his drawing homework, practicing the piano and watching cartoons on TV. The emotional and practical support that these extended families provided were protective elements.

On the other hand, some grandparents’ parenting styles that are not ideal may be considered as a risk factor on preschoolers’ resilience. For instance, Ian’s grandmother’s frightening grandparenting style was a negative influential element that might cause Ian’s lived experience of fear in response to darkness and supernatural beings, such as ghosts, monsters, and evil demons (Extract 4.70). However, the fact that Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling further provided some good role models (e.g. Buddha) it could also be considered a protective element (Extract 4.71). Nevertheless, it was the frightening storytelling she used to get Ian and his brother to behave that had a more powerful influence on Ian’s and his twin brother’s narrative (Extract 4.70). Furthermore, in Timothy’s case, his grandfather’s parenting style was to overindulge him by buying toys and giving him the freedom to do what he wanted, which included watching TV programs and movies with inappropriate content (Extract 4.35).
Supportive colleagues after divorce

Although colleagues were only mentioned in Howard’s mother’s interview, it indicated that colleagues’ assistance as a protective element was important in this single-parent family. When Howard’s mother was busy, her colleagues helped her by picking up Howard from preschool and taking him to a music cram school.

Extract 5.3 Howard’s mother’s appreciation of colleagues(Interview 20150410 APH)

Howard’s mother  “Yes, I had a difficult time but I am also grateful that I was very lucky to have so much assistance and resources. (...) My colleagues’ daughters and a son are in the same preschool as my son, so they pick up my son for me if I am still busy at school. Sometimes they help me by taking Howard to his piano class at a cram school.”

Preschool teachers and preschools

The seven teachers in the three preschools in this study were viewed as protective elements for a few reasons. Firstly, all of the participant children had very strong connectedness with their teachers. The close relationship between Howard and Miss Cindy and Miss Bella was observed in my reflection diary (Extract 4.8), but also in Miss Bella’s interview (Extract 4.19).

In addition, the three preschools provided good opportunities to practice the participants’ social skills and to learn problem-solving skills. For example, the main challenge for Victor with Asperger’s syndrome was his lack of social skills and needed to interact more positively with others. Victor had difficulties making friends in Dolphin Class in the first few months (Extract 4.50, 4.51, 4.52, and 4.53), until Miss Betty created a volunteer storytelling time during which Victor, as an outstanding storyteller, impressed his peers which transformed their perception of him (Extract 4.61). During the period of time when he conflicted with his peers, Victor’s mother and two teachers helped him by identifying a solution in order to calm him down. Providing an individual
reading space was the useful and practical solution that Victor took advantage of in Dolphin Class (Extract 4.56 and 4.57). Furthermore, in Kelvin’s case, as he struggled with his anger issues, the friendly and supportive environment of Rabbit Class allowed him to practice his three solutions for releasing his anger.

Cram schools and teachers

A cram school in this study refers to a school after the preschoolers’ school-day finishes, which provides extracurricular activities (e.g. music and sports classes) and/or reinforces targeted academic training in a pre-learning Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, Mathematics, English, or Science. The latter is called ‘academic-orientated cram schools’. For example, Howard and Victor went to cram schools after school to learn piano and art respectively, while Kelvin attended one with diverse academic training. From Howard and Victor’s parents’ perspective, the major function for sending them to cram schools was to learn to play the piano, and art was to extend child care services until their parents finished work (Extract 5.3). In this regard, a cram school served a dual purpose by providing an alternative caregiver’s role.

In Kelvin’s case, cram schools impacted his resilience development in a number of ways. Kelvin’s competitive attitude towards his learning was influenced by the teacher’s behaviour management, which made use of a reward incentive system, in his academic-orientated cram school. There was an important relationship between competitions, reinforcement, Kelvin’s learning motivation, and interpersonal relationships which was explored during his narrative interpretation and analysis in Chapter 4. Kelvin was successfully reinforced by his teacher’s token system in his academic-orientated cram schools, and therefore he may have transferred such behavioural models developed in the cram schools to the preschool, for example a weaving task (Extract 4.23), exercises in the playground (Extract 4.24), and mathematics assignments (Extract 4.25). Kelvin’s learning motivation could be increased by this reward system, which might be a positive factor of his resilience; whereas Kelvin had difficulties dealing with his loss in learning activities and saw it as an unfair result of his perceived competitions, which was a risk to his interpersonal relationships.
Therapists

In this study, the therapists were Victor’s speech pathologist and occupational therapist, who were both viewed as a protective factor to develop his resilience. Victor’s therapists were based in the hospital that diagnosed his developmental delay and also his articulation issue. When Victor shared his feelings of joy over his therapists, who he met for two hours a week, in the group discussions, I perceived this as positive lived experiences.

Extract 5.4 Victor’s lived experience of therapists (Observation 20141110BCV)

Miss Betty “Who else wants to share the experience of being sick?”
Victor (raised his hand) “Me. Me. Teacher (Miss Betty)!” (Without Miss Betty’s approval, Victor said,) “I go to a hospital. I like Miss Lee (I gathered she was one of his therapists).”
Miss Betty “Why? Do you like to go to hospital?”
Victor (did not look at Miss Betty.) “There are many toys.” (I could not hear his murmur for a second). “I like it.” (Victor’s mother confirmed that the therapy room has many toys in her interview.)

I did not have a chance to interview Victor’s therapists but from his narrative and his mother’s interviews, I observed that his relationship with his therapists was a protective element.

To sum up, there are a few negative and positive influences on the five children’s resilience in the microsystem. Howard’s parents’ divorce, Ian’s grandmother’s frightening storytelling, and Kelvin’s parents’ unrealistic expectations were the primary concerns that negatively influenced the development of their resilience. On the other hand, there were perceivably protective elements, such as the five caring families, the preschools they attended, the strong connectedness between the teachers and children, and in Victor’s case, his therapists.

5.2.3 Mesosystem level

The mesosystem delineates the connection between each individual microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). This means that the interaction among the influential
elements in the microsystem also took place in the mesosystem. In mesosystems, there were two meaningful interactions revealed in Table 5.3. One was the interaction between the seven preschool teachers and the five participants’ parents; the other was that of the cram schools and the three families. These two interactions are also recognized as crucial proximal processes in this study.

Table 5.3
**Influential Mesosystem Elements on the Five Children’s Resilience Analysed by BEST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mesosystem Levels</th>
<th>Teachers-Parents-Grandparents</th>
<th>Cram schools-Families-Preschools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Howard</strong></td>
<td>+Effective teacher - mother communication</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kelvin</strong></td>
<td>+Effective teacher - mother communication</td>
<td>+Alternative childcare centre +Satisfied parental expectations •Different expectations of Kelvin’s education and teaching strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timothy</strong></td>
<td>+Effective teacher - mother communication</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victor</strong></td>
<td>+Effective teacher - mother communication</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ian</strong></td>
<td>+Effective teacher - mother communication</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“-”: Risk factors; “+”: Protective factors; “•”: Both risk and protective factors; “N/A”: Not applicable; “Not evident”: An element might influence an individual’s resilience but there was a lack of evidence.

**Teachers, parents, and grandparents**

Teacher-parent interactions were significant mesosystem elements in this study. Although the teachers and the parents were not main research participants, their effective communications and cooperative rapports supported the five preschoolers’ resilience development. For instance, the parents participated in Parent-Child Reading activities at home and helped with the worksheets related to the resilience-orientated story discussions. As a result, Kelvin identified three solutions to deal with his anger (Figure 4.28). Furthermore, due to parent-teacher collaboration, Howard’s mother confirmed that reading the resilience-orientated story was a good method for her to tell Howard about her divorce, which originally she did not know how to explain (Extract 4.20).
Another example was when Victor with Asperger’s syndrome had a social behaviour problem, leading to a difficulty in classroom management, Miss Sunny and Miss Betty, of Dolphin Class, experienced supportive cooperation from Victor’s mother to find a solution (Extract 4.56). As the two teachers also had difficulties with managing Victor’s persistently challenging behaviour, caused by his Asperger’s syndrome, Victor’s mother not only discussed a solution with him (which was reading when he was agitated) but also provided therapeutic knowledge about Asperger’s syndrome to the teachers. Hence, it can be concluded that this example illustrates how parent-teacher cooperation can effectively and positively influence preschoolers’ resilience.

Moreover, as mentioned previously, the importance of the grandparents as alternative caregivers should not be overlooked. Additionally, their interactions with the preschool teachers were cooperative and proactive.

Extract 5.5 Miss Sunny’s interview – Parent-teacher interaction (Con. Extract 4.56) (Interview 20151224CTS)

I “Sounds like Victor’s mother is very cooperative with you in his preschool education. But it seems his mother is very busy because I see Victor’s grandmother here more often. Do you talk to her as well?”

Miss Sunny “Yes, his parents are pretty busy so Victor’s grandparents take him to school and pick him up almost every day. I only talk to his grandmother about Victor’s routine at preschool and bringing tissues, extra clothes to change into, etc. if necessary, and his grandmother would remind me of lost clothing that Victor brought in and left behind. If something is important, she would ask me to talk to Victor’s mother directly or deliver my written message to the mother. They both are helpful and their support is good for Victor’s adjustment at preschool.”

The grandparents in this study all shared in their grandchildren’s care to different extents, which contributed to their resilience significantly as described in a microsystem level.
Families, cram schools, and preschools

From Howard, Kelvin and Victor’s parents’ perspective, a cram school represented two functions in this study. Firstly, the cram school was an alternative childcare centre that provided extra hours of childcare until the parents finished work. For instance, Howard’s mother and Victor’s parents all needed to work longer hours than the public preschool in Taiwan could provide. Hence, their grandparents and the cram schools had to share childcare after school.

Secondly, the cram school also fulfilled parental expectations for their children’s education. From Kelvin’s parents’ perspective, their expectation apparently influenced, and was influenced by the cram school. Kelvin’s mother recognized that the academic-orientated cram school was not only an important alternative childcare service but also reassurance that Kelvin’s academic learning would succeed (Extract 5.1). Kelvin’s mother mentioned that prior to Kelvin’s preschool enrolment; she already had him take different lessons in order to inspire academic learning, such as flash cards, mental mathematics, and a class of potential development. Hence, it is a reciprocal interaction that cram schools satisfy Kelvin’s parental expectations and parents rely on the effectiveness of the school in terms of pre-academic learning.

In terms of the interaction between preschool and cram school, the purpose of these two education institutions was slightly different, even though they both provided a childcare service as their primary function. Initially, the public preschool in Taiwan complies with the Early Childhood Education and Care Act (ECECA) to ensure young children’s “physical and psychological development” (Ministry of Education, 2013, Article 1), while the cram school is primarily to fulfil parents’ needs for supplemental means of enhancing their children’s abilities, and the provision of after preschool care. Because of this difference, the curriculum and pedagogy in these two settings were implemented differently in Kelvin’s case. Besides, the main concern was the two classroom managements were dissimilar. The preschool teachers in Rabbit Class were concerned about the overuse of the token system and the conflicting behavioural management with Kelvin’s cram school teachers. Miss Bella continually mentioned that the teachers in his academic-orientated cram school often implemented token
reinforcement systems as an important strategy of children’s behavioural management (Extract 4.32).

This families-cram schools-preschools mesosystem influenced the participant children in both positive and negative ways. The effect of the relationship in the mesosystem on the development of children’s resilience in this study likely depended on which types of cram schools that the participant attended to. For example, an academic-orientated cram school would be considered as a negative element. This is not only because the implementation of classroom management in preschools and this cram school in the mesosystem was conflict, but also because Miss Bella was very aware of the negative influence of using this token system on Kelvin’s future learning autonomy. Moreover, as discussed in the microsystem, the interaction between Kelvin and the academic-orientated cram school was a concern because his learning was already conditioned by rewards and winning became more important than the process of learning and other activities. In this regard, Kelvin’s cram school had a negative impact on his resilience development. However, the cram schools that provided extracurricular activities in sports and arts and functioned as extra-hour childcare services in this study showed positive influences on children’s resilience.

5.2.4 Exosystem level

As the exosystem contains at least one indirect setting, the influential elements of children’s resilience development in the exosystem did not appear as clearly as those influences from other ecological systems did. In Table 5.4, the influence of exosystems on the five participants’ resilience was found in the interactions between preschool, home and hospital; and between family, temple and preschool. The interaction between individuals and media was defined in the exosystem in accordance with BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), which is also discussed in this section.
Table 5.4

*Influential Exosystem Elements on the Five Children’s Resilience Analysed by BEST*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exosystem Levels</th>
<th>Preschools- Families-Hospitals</th>
<th>Families-Temples-Preschools</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- Low learning motivation • Media consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>+Providing early intervention</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Lived experience with temples</td>
<td>- A stimulant for fear response + Knowledge source</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“-”: Risk factors; “+”: Protective factors; “•”: Both risk and protective factors; “N/A”: Not applicable; “Not evident”: An element might influence an individual’s resilience but there was a lack of evidence.

**Preschools, Families, and hospitals**

This interaction between teachers, parents, grandparents and therapists applied uniquely to Victor’s case. As he had been diagnosed with developmental delay and Asperger’s syndrome, Victor had more opportunities to interact with a hospital than the other children. Apparently, in order to have an early intervention Victor’s family closely collaborated with the hospital where his mother worked, whereas the two teachers did not interact directly with Victor’s therapists. Due to the relationship between his parents and the hospital, and the close and effective communicative relationship between his mother and the preschool, Victor’s teachers could learn about Asperger’s syndrome and adjusted their behaviour management of Victor accordingly (Extract 5.5). In this regard, this interaction was considered to be a protective and positive influence on the development of Victor’s resilience.

**Families, temples, and preschools**

In Ian’s mother’s interview, she mentioned that Ian’s grandmother had her Gods’ room at home where she liked to pray at least twice a day. While on some special occasions, such as the ghosts’ month in July (Extract 5.5), lunar New Year, Buddha’s birthday or Gods’ memorials, Ian’s grandmother would pray in temples. When Ian
talked about ghosts, evil spirits or demons in his narratives or conversations with his peers, I perceived that the praying that Ian has experienced might influence his belief of supernatural beings.

**Media**

Another finding of the influential element in an exosystem was media. The five children’s interaction with the media is considered as a key proximal process in this study. When I interviewed the parents, all of the participant children had at least two hours of media consumption a day, such as watching TV programmes, playing computer games, or playing video games on smartphones and tablets. The influence of the media on Timothy and Ian’s resilience appeared to be both positive and negative. On the positive side, the media enriched the content of Timothy’s drawings, and thus his peers were able to perceive Timothy’s drawing talent (Extract 4.37 and 4.49). In Ian’s case, although he mixed up the astronaut’s news on TV with a Doraemon cartoon, his astronomical knowledge was shown when he read a book about astronauts (Extract 4.69).

On the negative side, because of Timothy’s excessive late night media consumption, he could not get to preschool on time and consequently demonstrated low levels of interest in preschool learning activities (Extract 4.41 and Extract 4.42). The other example was Ian’s narratives in response to monsters, aliens and UFOs, which he had seen in cartoons and on the news (Extract 4.68). Apparently, Ian was influenced by the media because the images of bad monsters and robots from cartoons were one of the causes of Ian’s fear.

In conclusion, the exosystems in this study contain three interactions: the relationship between preschool, family, and the hospital (which is specific in Victor’s context due to his Asperger’s syndrome); the interaction between family, temple and preschool which was unique in Ian’s case; and, the media, which both positively and negatively influenced the development of the children’s resilience.
5.2.5 Macrosystem level

A macrosystem, including individual lifestyle, belief systems, customs, cultures, ideology, globalization, media, government policy, and so forth, indirectly influences individual development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1993). In this study the macrosystem outlined in Table 5.5 illustrates three influential elements on the development of the participants’ resilience, such as multiple religious traditions, education reform, and welfare systems. These interactions are also recognized as important proximal processes in this study.

Table 5.5
Influential Macrosystem Elements on the Five Children’s Resilience Analysed by BEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macrosystem Levels</th>
<th>Multiple religious traditions</th>
<th>Education reform</th>
<th>Social welfare &amp; Educational support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvin</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>• Education reform led to parents’ stress and concerns</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>• Parents’ dilemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>- Fear of supernatural beings and uncertainty</td>
<td>Not evident</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“-”: Risk factors; “+”: Protective factors; “•”: Both risk and protective factors; “N/A”: Not applicable; “Not evident”: An element might influence an individual’s resilience but there was a lack of evidence.

Multiple religious traditions, folk beliefs and religions

Multiple religious traditions as an influential element were found in Ian’s narrative and his mother’s interview. As abovementioned, Ian explained the ghost story his grandmother told to get them (Ian and his twin brother) to behave (Extract 4.70). I clarified this lived experience Ian had at home with his mother. Ian’s mother further confirmed that Ian’s grandmother told a variety of folktales and stories about ghosts and Gods (Extract 4.70 and 4.71). These stories in relation to multiple Taiwanese religious traditions have been told from one generation to another as I too heard them when I was little. When Ian’s mother referred to the Buddha’s story, it was associated with my lived experience so that the focus of the interview questions changed to the understanding of
Ian’s family’s lived experience. As is usual with other people, Ian’s grandmother had a Gods’ room and was a devout worshipper.

Extract 5.6 Ian’s mother’s telephone interview (Cont.) (Interview 20150327CPI)

I “Do you have a Gods’ room at home?”

Ian’s mother “Yes, We have the room for Ian’s grandma to worship Gods and pray... She worships Gods every morning and evening and our ancestors in Chinese traditional festivals”

I “Would you all participate in these ceremonies?”

Ian’s mother “Yes and no. I mean that if the festivals are on a holiday, then I help her to prepare some food or fruits. Ian and Sean always run around, but they know how we worship Gods and ancestors in the Gods’ room... You reminded me of Ian’s fear of ghosts. You know July in the lunar calendar is the month of the ghost. Two years ago, after Ian’s grandma told him that, he refused to sleep alone in July.”

Figure 5.1 A typical example of the family Gods’ room in Taiwan
Figure 5.1 is a representation of a typical Gods’ room in a Taiwanese residence. Ian’s grandmother would worship in the Gods’ room at home at least twice a day, and on special occasions, such as Gods’ birthdays and memorials, the first and fifth days in the lunar calendar, traditional festivals and so forth. The room and the folk beliefs of the ghost month in Extract 5.6 were also associated with the multiple religious traditions in Taiwan. As Ian grew up in such an environment, and interacted daily with his grandmother who practiced these traditions, it was understandable that these experiences contributed to his belief in supernatural beings, and his fear of darkness.

**Education reform**

Education reform was pointed out as an influential element by Kelvin’s mother when she reflected on her high expectation for her two boys, and blamed the failure of education reform in Taiwan over the last ten years for her concerns. Because of the failed education reform, Kelvin’s parents became more anxious and concerned about the quality of educational opportunities for their children in the future.

Extract 5.7 Kelvin’s mother’s interview (Cont.) (Interview 20150121APK)

_I_ “It sounds like you and your husband have very high expectations for Kelvin and his brother.”

_Kelvin’s mother_ “Certainly, which parents can say that they don’t care about their children’s education? Look at education reform in Taiwan over the past ten years... (I omitted the complaint and the political talk). The policy changes over time. How are we going to make sure our children can go to a good university? This is a very competitive society. We are very nervous when we see that the education reform did not work out. Because of that, we cannot rely on the government. We don’t have another choice; we have to find the way to educate our children. As parents, we are all the same. We just want to provide our best for our children and let them succeed in their future.”
Kelvin’s mother expected that her two sons’ academic performance should be the best. This expectation may have reinforced Kelvin’s competitive attitude. However, I perceived that Kelvin’s parents’ high expectations were not only because of their parental role, but also because of their anxiety about the failed education reform in Taiwan, and how that might affect their children’s future and their opportunity to go to a good university. This unsatisfactory education reform in Bronfenbrenner’s macrosystem indirectly influenced the parental expectations and concerns for their children’s education in a microsystem. As a result, it can be concluded that this element of the macrosystem indirectly influenced a microsystem that has directly influenced Kelvin’s learning, and therefore his resilience development.

**Social welfare and educational support**

Social welfare and educational support as influential elements were revealed in Victor’s mother’s interview. As Victor’s mother was a nurse, she believed that social welfare for disabled people in the medical system in Taiwan was a protective factor whereas, applying additional support in education was a dilemma for this family.

To support the early intervention education service for children with disabilities in preschool, parents or caregivers can register for a free early intervention service provided by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan when their children enrol in preschool. However, Victor’s mother gave up his right to use this intervention support when she enrolled him at Coast Preschool in 2013 for two reasons. The first reason was Victor’s mother could not accept her son’s developmental delay as diagnosed, which I already explored in the microsystem level. The second reason was his mother wanted to avoid the high possibility of Victor being discriminatory labelled during his schooling.

Extract 5.8 Victor’s mother’s interview (Cont.) (Interview 20150425CPV)

_I_ “Miss Sunny told me that there is a free speech pathology service for preschoolers who have speech delay issues but you rejected that in the first year.”

_Victor’s mother_ “Yes. I know if children hold a disability ID, they can apply for special education or additional education services for free but I did not want that in the first year. (...) Another reason is
I don't want to see Victor treated differently at school. And there is a record kept once you have applied for the social welfare service. Victor has his disability ID card but it is only for his medication. The medical system is confidential. I know it because I’m a nurse. However, once he has been reported as a child with special needs in a school setting, he would have to carry this term for the next 12 years of his schooling. You can see these two differences.”

I  “I understand that. Labelling has been disputed in education for so long. But why did you change your mind this year?”

Victor’s mother (was laughing.) “haha… It is hard for us to make a decision honestly. We know any extra support is good for Victor but still have doubts and concern about the consequences of this service. (Paused and silent for a few seconds) Victor’s father convinced me eventually. He said if we cannot accept Victor is special, nobody will accept him like he is. As long as we as his parents do not label him, we cannot control what happens in the future. This is the most important thing we can do. Although I was struggling with my doubts about this, I have to compromise.”

I  “What do you mean by compromise?”

Victor’s mother “Compromise the fact that on the one hand extra support is important and beneficial for Victor, on the other hand, we have to accept the possibility of labelling during schooling.”

The acceptance or rejection of the early intervention education service became a dilemma for his parents from the day Victor enrolled in preschool. Compared with the social welfare system in Taiwan, providing for Victor’s medication, which can be viewed as a positive factor, the welfare influence in his education was viewed as a potential risk factor for his resilience development. Although taking the early intervention might also have placed him at-risk due to the labelling stigma following him throughout his future education. Victor’s parents’ attitude towards Victor’s Asperger’s syndrome was eventually, very positive.
5.2.6 Chronosystem level and proximal process

The personal characteristics and the environment or settings where an individual lives are consistently changing over time, which is the definition of chronosystem as the latest system of BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994, 1995). The focus of chronosystems in this study is on microtime and mesotime as discussed in Chapter 2. In the previous chapter (Chapter 4), children’s resilience stories were presented individually in a chronological order, and demonstrated that the use of teachers’ storytelling in relation to the resilience-orientated story over five months created changes in the five participant children’s resilience development. During the period of my observations, the children’s resilience appeared to improve, and the use of teachers’ storytelling and resilience-orientated stories were essential elements.

As proximal process is affected by time, in this study it shows in several important interactions between the five preschoolers and their immediate and remote ecologies, as applied in the mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem level. In this section, a proximal process revealed a significant interaction between the participant children and teachers’ storytelling over five months. In other words, how teachers’ storytelling influenced the five preschoolers’ lived experiences related to resilience, and the changes in their resilience through engaging in teachers’ storytelling during my data collection are presented here.

In this study, teachers’ storytelling is an important influential element on the development of children’s resilience in the system of the mesotime because storytelling is used as a screening mechanism, a medium, and a comforter. Additionally, the effectiveness of teachers’ storytelling on the preschooler’s improved behaviour and emotional balance was consistently observed. These two points, storytelling and the manifestation of children’s improvement, are discussed in the chronosystem level.

**Storytelling as a screening mechanism**

*Screening for risk factors.* Although all resilience-orientated story topics were initially selected for some particular children who had problem behaviours or needed emotional support, these story topics were also beneficial to the other children in the
class. Some of the children’s risk factors were discovered incidentally during teachers’ storytelling and the story discussion. For instance, Ian’s fear of darkness was incidentally identified as his risk factor in his resilience development when Miss Sunny and I attempted to help the children’s separation anxiety by reading ‘Wemberly Worried’, the discussion after this story triggered Ian’s worry and fear (Extract 4.66). Through resilience-orientated storytelling as a screening mechanism in this study, the teachers and I were able to identify children’s influential elements.

Screening emotional needs. When the resilience-orientated stories told touched children’s lived experiences and inner worlds, these children tended to be eager to read such stories. Howard not only actively reread the stories relating to the topic of single-parent family at preschool, but also borrowed them to take back home to read with his mother. Ian, however, picked up the storybooks related to ghosts and darkness, such as ‘The Dark,’ ‘In the Shadow of a Wolf,’ ‘I Can Do It,’ and ‘No Fear’, more often than the other resilience-orientated storybooks with different topics.

Storytelling as a medium/platform

Accessing children’s voices effectively. The resilience-orientated stories the teachers told in the three preschools all provided productive discussion topics for young children to express their opinions and release their feelings. As the stories were non-judgemental and corresponded to the children’s lived experience, most of the children felt more comfortable about revealing their problems and emotions in the group discussion. This was because when the children engaged in the teachers’ storytelling and the story discussion, the story became the basis of my interview questions. For instance, when ‘I Have Two Homes’ was told, Howard was more comfortable and confident about sharing the fact that his parents were living in different homes located in different cities. I also used this story to get to know how Howard contacted his father. Through the stories as children’s interview questions, the preschoolers became more confident and were able to express themselves more freely.

Demonstrating positive thinking and problem-solving. The resilience-orientated story always provided various perspectives towards a particular problem in order to find a solution, or change a negative attitude to positive thinking. For instance, when Kelvin
felt winning was the most important thing, the book ‘Win and Loss’ let him explore the idea that the winner might not really be happy, and being the loser was not necessarily bad. In Howard’s case, through the story ‘Good News; Bad News,’ he gained a positive view of parents’ divorce. Howard came to believe that it was good news, when the parents in the story did not live together because they would not quarrel (Extract 4.16). Moreover, in the story, ‘I Can Do It,’ Ian adopted the character’s solution to be friends with ghosts, which was an effective problem-solving technique for coping with his fear.

Engaging children in learning. Storytelling was a useful and effective pedagogy in Timothy’s case as it kept his attention and stimulated his engagement in learning activities. Although Timothy had low interests in Mandarin Phonetic Symbols and Mathematics lessons (Extract 4.42), he actively involved himself in the teachers’ storytelling and the story discussion (Extract 4.43, 4.44, and 4.45).

Storytelling as a comforter

Projection. When the preschoolers found that the story essentially corresponded to their lived experiences, they tended to project themselves into the story more completely. For example, when Miss Bella told the story, ‘Anger,’ Kelvin noticed that the little boy in this story was similar to himself when he was very angry after a recent math assignment caused him to have an angry outburst (Extract 4.27). Additionally, Howard acknowledged that as he also had two homes, he was similar to the character in the story, ‘I Have Two Homes’ (Extract 4.12). In Ian’s case, he projected himself into the story called ‘The Dark’ while he was reading it. When turning a page that was all black, Ian’s body was shaking and he made a creepy sound as if he was in the story scenario.

Comforting emotions. In this study, I discovered that the use of the resilience-orientated stories could comfort and alleviate children’s negative feelings through my observations of their behaviours and emotional expressions when they were interviewed. For instance, Howard was eager to read all the stories associated with his lived experience in a single-parent family after Miss Bella presented these storybooks in the reading centre. Through the repeated reading of these stories, Howard arrived at an understanding of his parental separation, when his mother did not know how to explain the divorce. Although Howard did not mention that these stories comforted his
emotional needs, his tearful emotional outbursts apparently decreased. Another case that supports this comforting effect was that of Victor, who appeared to become calmer after an outburst when he read a book. In addition, Ian’s feeling of fear was reduced noticeably as the story inspired him to be friends with the ghosts and monsters that he was previously afraid of. It is concluded from these observations that these children all had the shared experience of deriving comfort from reading resilience-orientated stories repeatedly, as demonstrated by their display of comforted emotions.

**Emotional improvement**

*Howard’s resilience engendered by understanding of his parents’ divorce.*
Through reading the resilience-orientated stories associated with the topic of a single-parent family, Howard was able to understand his parents’ divorce, which reduced his unstable emotions. In one of the story discussions, as a result of Miss Bella’s inspiring self-disclosure and question, the children were allowed to feel positive and privileged if they had more than one home. With this positive thinking about having more than one home, rather than feeling ashamed about the situation, Howard freely acknowledged his parents’ divorce in a group discussion.

*Ian’s resilience enhanced by surmounting his fear of darkness.* Ian eventually conquered his fear after one of the resilience-orientated stories provided a beneficial problem-solving strategy, namely that of becoming friends with something he was afraid of.

**Behaviour improvement**

*Timothy’s resilience improved by engaging in the teachers’ storytelling.*
Timothy’s overuse of the media directly affecting his routine and indirectly influenced his learning motivation at preschool, which in turn became a risk factor for his resilience. However, after the teachers’ storytelling and reading with his parents, he was more willing to engage in preschool learning activities and possible emergent writing, which appeared in a drawing on his reading worksheet (Figure 4.14).

*Kelvin’s resilience enhanced by dealing with his anger.* Although the resilience-orientated stories related to positive thinking did not change Kelvin’s value of
competitions, he did learn how to deal with his anger after losing competitions through another resilience-orientated story discussion related to emotional issues. As Miss Bella guided all preschoolers to draw their solutions for their anger on their worksheets, Kelvin shared three solutions in the group discussion, and demonstrated one of them, which was a musical diversion. When he became angry or irritated in class, Miss Marie and one of his peers on separate occasions reminded Kelvin of his anger releasing strategy. Kelvin not only released his anger but also avoided a negative emotional outburst.

Victor’s resilience developed by improving his interpersonal relationship with peers. Victor’s risk factor derived from his diagnosis of developmental delay and Asperger’s syndrome, which resulted in his poor interaction skills and interpersonal relationships. As Asperger’s syndrome did not affect his reading competence, being a volunteer storyteller gave Victor an opportunity to demonstrate his superior reading ability to peers. After this impressive storytelling performance, his peers viewed Victor in a different light, as a competent reader rather than a trouble-maker. Consequently, this storytelling demonstration became an important turning point for improving Victor’s interpersonal relationships.

5.3 Summary

This chapter outlined the findings related to the second Research Objective (RO2), which was to explore the influential elements on five preschoolers’ resilience development through the lens of BEST. The interactions between these elements were involved in the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Some common elements were indicated in a substantial body of resilience research, such as a single-parent family, caring parents, supportive preschool teachers and work colleagues, and children with disabilities. However, it was necessary to understand that the five preschoolers’ lived experiences were embedded in diverse social and local contexts, and this study was conducted in a non-western country. Several influential elements were unique, such as grandparents and extended family, cram schools, multiple religious traditions and the implementation of valuable storytelling in relation to the resilience-orientated stories in this study.
The next chapter presents a synthesised discussion of the two findings chapters in relation to the two Research Objectives. Based on the findings of RO1, there are four themes discussed in the next chapter. The findings of RO2 in analysing children’s narratives within BEST revealed the understandings of the influential elements and their interactions on preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience, which will be discussed with the Western resilience literature.
Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Overview

Through the lens of BEST, this study aims to explore the lived experience of preschoolers’ resilience through engaging and interacting with teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in the public preschools in Taiwan. The previous two chapters (Chapter 4 and 5) respectively present the findings of the two Research Objectives developed from the main purpose of this study.

RO1 explores preschoolers’ narratives of resilience through interacting with teachers’ storytelling and engaging in discussions of resilience-orientated stories. The findings showed how the children’s resilience stories were uniquely expressed, and that the story constructed diverse meanings in relation to the development of their resilience. In order to narrow the gap in the body of knowledge on the lived experiences of preschool children’s resilience in a non-Western country, this narrative exploration of five children’s resilience stories was guided by the narrative analytical framework developed from Riessman’s dialogic/performance analysis. This identified four major themes from the content of children’s narratives of resilience and from the multimodal way children express their narratives. This study particularly highlights that the exploration of the five preschoolers’ narratives of resilience extends insights into the understandings of the importance of teachers’ storytelling as an effective pedagogy and as an early intervention of resilience. This is because through the use of storytelling pedagogy preschoolers can build resonance with resilience-orientated stories, which is crucial to the improvement of their resilience development. In addition, the complementary relationship between children’s resilience and identities found in the early years is emphasized in this study. Through understanding their identities, children can be recognized as the motivator of the development of their resilience.

Following RO1, RO2 explores the content of children’s narratives related to influential elements and interactions between individuals and the elements embedded in diverse ecologies on the development of children’s resilience as viewed through the lens of BEST. Through analysing children’s narratives within BEST, the understanding of
the influential elements and their interactions on preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience was generally congruent with the Western resilience literature. From the perspective of the Taiwanese social and cultural context however, this study extends an insight into culturally influential elements on children’s resilience development, such as cram schools, active grandparental involvement in extended families and multiple religious traditions, which contributes to the existing knowledge of resilience literature as well as to BEST.

Based on the findings and discussions of the two Research Objectives, this discussion chapter contributes to the theoretical understanding of children’s resilience by evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of the application of BEST in this study. In light of these discussions, this study conceptualizes an emerging resilience model grounded on the Taiwanese social and cultural context.

**Figure 6.1** A diagram of the presentation of the discussion chapter
Discussion of the findings begins with an overview of the findings of the five preschooler’s narratives of resilience. As per the four themes of RO1 shown in Figure 6.1, the majority of the themes are congruent with current resilience literature. The discussion then moves to the findings of the sources of resilience within BEST, which further reflect some of the benefits and limitations of this theoretical framework. Finally, the discussion of RO1 integrates RO2 into the conceptualization of an emerging resilience model from the perspective of the social and cultural context of Taiwan.

### 6.2 RO1: Narratives of Resilience

RO1 explored preschoolers’ narratives of resilience through interacting with teachers’ storytelling and engaging in discussions of resilience-orientated stories. The findings in RO1 are discussed with regard to two aspects. The first aspect focuses on the content of children’s narratives in relation to resilience when the five children engaged with teachers’ storytelling and story discussions. From this perspective, there are three themes revealed in the main findings of this study, including teachers’ storytelling as an effective pedagogy building resonance with children’s lived experiences, collaborative narratives as a facilitator to meaning-making, and children’s resilience connected with their identities. The second aspect discusses the multimodal ways children express their narratives. This theme shows that the multimodality of their narratives as a useful method of data collection in young children’s research. This is because collecting multimodal narratives altogether extends an opportunity to comprehensively understand their lived experiences, and enhances the credibility of this study.

#### 6.2.1 Resonance between teachers’ storytelling and children’s lived experiences and its role in promoting resilience

In RO1, the role of teachers’ storytelling was shown to be an effective pedagogy in understanding preschoolers’ lived experiences and cultivating their resilience. In this study, the preschool teachers told resilience-orientated stories, which aimed to enhance the development of children’s resilience. Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling, the participant children’s resilience was facilitated in distinct ways, such as: engaging in learning; understanding their life difficulties by accessing their lived experiences with
their own voices; imitating the story protagonists’ problem solving and positive thinking; and comforting their negative emotions. Some of these are commensurate with a number of studies (e.g. Brouzos, Vassilopoulos, & Moschou, 2016; Collins & Cooper, 1997; Fredericks, 2003; Livo & Rietz, 1986). For instance, storytelling helps children spontaneously engage in learning (Collins & Cooper, 1997; Daniel, 2012). All of the five participants in this study were actively involved in teachers’ storytelling and also in the story discussions. As the three preschools set up a separate fixed time for telling resilience-orientated stories, the preschoolers would eagerly demonstrate their understanding of the story by answering questions and actively sharing their thoughts. In particular Timothy, at Countryside Preschool, engaged in his teachers’ storytelling by sharing his subtle findings of the black and white colours used in the storybooks, compared to his low learning motivation in mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols lessons (Extract 4.43 and 4.44).

In addition, this study brings an insight into the understanding of teachers’ storytelling as a useful pedagogy. This was evidenced by the topics of resilience-orientated stories and/or the questions the teachers asked in the story discussion that resonated with the preschoolers’ unique lived experiences. The children projected themselves easily into the story in order to:

- Gain comfort to deal with the sadness and confusion experienced due to his parents’ divorce in Howard’s case
- Deal with over competiveness and resulting anger issues in Kelvin’s case
- Engage with classroom teaching activities and demonstrate promise of improvement in scholastic endeavours in Timothy’s case
- Improve interpersonal relationships in the classroom and gain new respect for previously unrecognized personal abilities in Victor’s case
- Overcome the feeling of fear in Ian’s case.
This was achieved by the children imitating solutions or coping strategies that the stories provided. At the same time, the teachers could access the children’s narratives of resilience in a variety of useful and practical ways in order to assist them with building resilience, thus creating an important reinforcement mechanism.

From the children’s perspectives, prior to the manifestation of the children’s resilience, they had to build a connection between their specific lived experiences and the topics of the resilience-orientated stories. This process of making a personal connection is called ‘children’s resonance with the resilience-orientated story’. For instance, Ian’s lived experience of fear of supernatural beings (e.g. ghosts, monsters, aliens, etc.) was connected with a few resilience-orientated stories, such as ‘The Dark’, ‘In the Shadow of a Wolf’, ‘When Anna is Afraid’, ‘I Can Do It’, and ‘No Fear’. Therefore, when Miss Sunny told the story, ‘The Dark’, that told of the main character being afraid of the dark at night as he imagined the presence of ghosts, this precisely corresponded to the fear of Ian’s lived experience (Extract 4.67). After Ian resonated with these resilience-orientated stories, his fear of darkness, owing to the presence of supernatural beings, was comforted by the story. In addition, he accepted the metaphorical solution from the content of ‘I Can Do It’, which was to make friends with the supernatural beings, and surmounted his feeling of fear (Extract 4.72). As this example demonstrates, once children have resonated with the story, the negative influence of their life difficulties on the development of their resilience can be moderated. This is achieved by the story providing diverse perspectives to positively view an issue and by suggesting various problem-solving skills (Brouzos et al., 2016; Pomerantz, 2007). Through the resonance with the content of teachers’ storytelling, children can obtain insights into the way the stories’ characters conquer their adverse lived circumstances, and in turn experience a boost in their own levels resilience (East et al., 2010). In this way, the children manifest their resilience in the embodiment of these insights into their lives.

As establishing children’s resonance with the resilience-orientated story is an important process in order to promote children’s resilience, there are several effective strategies used in storytelling pedagogy. From the teachers’ perspective, they applied a few techniques to reinforce the connection between children’s lived experiences and the
story such as, questioning, self-disclosure, and encouraging children’s discussion of the story. With these strategies, teachers’ storytelling can access the children’s voices effectively to obtain an understanding of the concerns in their inner world. As such, the pedagogy of storytelling can be very powerful in facilitating the development of children’s resilience. This was evident in the study when teachers used questioning and strategies in relation to engaging children’s active participation in a discussion of a story’s topic. For example, after reading ‘I Have Two Homes’, Miss Bella asked the children “How many homes do you have?” during the discussion of the story. This reinforced the connection between this story and Howard’s lived experience of his parents’ divorce. Then, Miss Bella initiated further disclosures by sharing her own personal circumstances, ‘I have two homes as the girl in the story has’. She not only showed her resonance with the story, but also demonstrated her projection into the story. Her storytelling pedagogy created a positive model for the children, and also opened their minds to the thought of having ‘homes’, rather than just a ‘home’. The teacher’s strategy offered an open discussion about homes and what that term means. This gave the children opportunities to rethink by listening to, and comparing their experiences with the experiences and perspectives of others. This positive environment created by the pedagogy of storytelling facilitated Howard’s acknowledgement of his parental separation.

Although a story is a mirror reflecting general human lived experiences to listeners (Collins & Cooper, 1997), what makes the story influential to the listeners is whether their lived experiences resonate with it. Howard’s example accounts for the influence of his resonance with a resilience-orientated story on his resilience development. When Howard’s experience of his parents’ divorce resonated with the story, his perception of the divorce changed. Therefore, resonance shows that the story mirrors children’s difficult circumstances and then in turn helps children to better comprehend those circumstances. In this way, it facilitates the projection mechanism to occur. Brouzos et al. (2016) explain the importance of the mechanism of projection occurring in storytelling, namely that “the storytelling process facilitates the projection of conflicting feelings and repressed needs and wishes onto the story's character” (p. 71). As the participants projected themselves into the resilience-orientated stories, they
were able to release their emotions and to accept the solutions the stories provided. This can be seen in the five children’s narratives of resilience.

As expected, storytelling, for teachers, proved to be an effective pedagogy to engage children in learning, and to understand children’s lived experiences by accessing their voices. In addition, storytelling for children, acted as both a comfort and a problem-solver in order to facilitate their resilience during this study. Apart from these findings being consistent with the literature, the insight into the understanding of teachers’ storytelling as an effective pedagogy is whether the children have resonance with the story. While storytelling is regarded as a child-centred pedagogy that can promote the development of children’s resilience, children’s resonance with the story and teachers’ storytelling play a crucial role. To reinforce the connection between children’s lived experiences and the story, questioning skills and other strategies related to children’s engagement in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions proved to be effective.

6.2.2 Collaborative narrative as a facilitator to construct meanings

If teachers’ storytelling as an effective pedagogy can promote children’s resilience development, through children’s engagement in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions, a collaborative construction in children’s narratives acts as a facilitator of the development of resilience. In the findings of RO1, collaborative narrative was a significant process to facilitate children’s meaning-making. Consistent with Livo and Rietz (1986) and Puroila et al. (2012a), collaborative construction in children’s narratives, in this study, means that the stories narrated by the five participant children were often collaboratively constructed in the context of the interactions between the children, their teachers and peers in the classrooms, and me as a researcher. Additionally, collaborative narratives taking place in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions facilitates children’s resilience as the collaborative construction extends a platform which allows children to demonstrate their competencies whilst stimulating positive thinking.

In this study, teachers’ storytelling and the story discussion that allows interactive and collaborative narrative between the teachers, participant children, and
their peers occurs as Livo and Rietz (1986) claims that “audiences and tellers negotiate a story into being in a highly dynamic interactive process” (p. 9). When children engage in teachers’ storytelling and the discussion of the story, “a process of collaborative meaning-making” takes place (Ødegaard, 2015, p. 67), which offers an opportunity for the children to demonstrate their own abilities. This was evident in this study when Miss Betty used questioning techniques in her storytelling. Victor, with Asperger’s syndrome, internally interacted with this storytelling strategy and externally collaborated with it in his volunteer storytelling (Extract 4.60). As Victor, using Miss Betty’s questioning skills, interacted with his peers harmoniously in his storytelling and story discussion, the whole storytelling process, as a collaborative narrative, demonstrated not only Victor’s reading and storytelling competencies, but also his skills in interpersonal interaction. This important collaborative narrative constructed significant meaning and was the turning point of his conflicted interpersonal relationships as his peers recognized his competencies, thus facilitating the development of his resilience.

Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling and the story discussion, collaborative construction in children’s narratives also stimulates children’s positive thinking. In Kelvin’s case, his collaborative narrative was created by Miss Bella’s questions from the discussion of the story ‘Win and Loss’, and his classmates’ different perspectives and interpretation of the story (Extract 4.31). While Kelvin’s initial criterion of good or bad news in response to winning or losing a game is based on a reward as a consequence of the game, his collaborative narrative with his teacher, classmates, and the story further stimulates the transformation of his belief from “losing is bad news” to “probably (losing is) not too bad” as his new meaning-making of win and loss. As a result, collaborative narrative occurs in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions, and constructs various meanings in relation to their resilience development. This finding foregrounds the importance of collaborative construction in children’s meaning-making as it offers an opportunity to promote children’s competence and to facilitate their positive thinking.

6.2.3 Children’s resilience connected with their identities

In the content of exploring the five children’s narratives in relation to resilience, this study unexpectedly revealed complementarities between children’s narrative
identities and narratives of resilience when children engaged in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions. This particular finding supports that children’s narrative identity formation emerges as early as preschool age (Ahn, 2011; Puroila & Estola, 2014), instead of in late adolescence (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Meanwhile, the formation of children’s narrative identities manifests the development of their resilience, and vice versa. This complementary relationship between children’s identities and resilience is reflected in different aspects of the unique social and cultural context in which the individual children experience during their daily life. Consequently, these important findings of the complementary relationship between children’s narrative identities and narratives of resilience are discussed in this section.

**Complementarities between children’s resilience and identities emerging at an early age**

It is difficult to say if children’s narrative identities emerge from narratives of resilience, or if the formation of their identities appears prior to the narratives of resilience. In line with cross-cultural research conducted by Ungar et al. (2007), they have discovered that when adolescents viewed themselves as resilient, they also show their strengths in their identities. In this study, a number of examples demonstrate that when children manifested their resilience they also identified simultaneously with who they are in certain ways. Through the manifestation of children’s resilience, their narrative identities gradually emerge. This was evident in the resilience story of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome. Consistent with children’s narrative identity constructed collaboratively and interactively (Puroila & Estola, 2014), from the perspective of Victor’s classmates, although he denied to be, he was implicitly labelled as a trouble-maker due to his violent emotional outbursts, and was unable to fit into a group learning style (Extract 4.51 and 4.52). As noted, a ‘trouble-maker’ was a negative label generated by continual misunderstanding of interpersonal interactions between Victor and his classmates. However, Victor eventually demonstrated his outstanding storytelling in Rabbit Class. (Extract 4.60 and 4.61). This is a turning point of the development of his resilience because he builds his identity as a competent storyteller.

Moreover, through understanding their identities, children can be recognized as the motivator of the development of their resilience. One of the examples is Howard
who constructs the meaning of “They are not living together” and the story, ‘I Have Two Homes’ as his narrative identity (Extract 4.17). From struggling to achieve an understanding of his parental separation, Howard frankly speaks out about his parental separation in the group discussion. This represents his meaning-making of his self-identity as a child living in multiple homes. In other words, when he acknowledges his two homes, Howard’s resilient identity emerges. In this case therefore, the understanding of the child’s narrative identity facilitates the development of his resilience.

The complementary relationship between children’s resilience and identities is rarely explored in their early years. This is because McAdams and McLean (2013) argued that the formation of narrative identity was not until late adolescence, which is the stage of Erikson’s development of identity. However, as the findings of the contemporary narrative researchers (e.g. Ahn, 2011; Puroila & Estola, 2014) are congruent with this study, the formation of young children’s identity emerging in their narratives can be recognized and interpreted as early as the time from which they start expressing themselves. The examples of Howard and Victor with Asperger’s syndrome, as aforementioned, are evidence of this phenomenon. Consequently, children in their early years are at a fundamental stage at which they can explore their identity through understanding their narratives.

**Narrative identity formation shaped by interactions with the unique social and cultural contexts**

Children’s narratives are embedded in unique contexts (Ahn, 2011; Puroila & Estola, 2014; Puroila et al., 2012a). Through exploring the content of children’s narratives of resilience, this study contributes to the understanding of how Taiwanese social and cultural contexts, such as telling folktales, folk beliefs and religious beliefs, and living in a society that practices multiple religious traditions, influence the formation of young children’s identities. Initially, the formation of the emergent identity is influenced by the interactions between the individual and his/her surroundings and contexts. For instance, Ian’s identity as a ‘good’ boy is implicitly demonstrated in the interactions with the media and with his grandmother. In terms of the influence of the media, in Ian’s narratives related to his fear of supernatural beings, he distinguished
between good or bad ghosts, robots and monsters, as the cartoon he watched frequently showed good and bad parties fighting each other where eventually the good party won (Extract 4.72 and 4.68). Ian perceived a clear answer to the judgement of good and bad subjects by interacting with the media.

In terms of Ian’s interaction with his grandmother, her telling of folktales and stories relating to religion highly likely affected Ian’s judgement between good and evil ghosts (Extract 4.70). Taiwanese folktales, as stories expressing folk beliefs and religions, consist of numerous stories of ghosts. These stories have been used commonly to threaten and exhort children to behave well. Consistent with the narrative research of Puroila et al. (2012a), young children believed Santa sent gifts to a well-behaved child rather than a naughty one, which has similar feature to the folktales in Taiwan. As folktales and religious stories convey the meaning of morality (Daniel, 2012), Ian’s emerging concept of the morality in his narratives illustrated that he was likely to be friends with ‘good’ supernatural beings. Through Ian’s interaction with his grandmother’s storytelling, Ian perceived the moral judgement of Taiwanese folktales, which implicitly explained that Ian identifies himself as a ‘good’ person.

Furthermore, through frequent provision of contexts where children interact directly, the influence on the personal identity formation can be reinforced. In this study, the daily interactions between individuals and their contexts reinforce the influence on the formation of children’s identities. In Ian’s case, his emergent identity is highly influenced not only by his grandmother’s folktales and religious stories, but also by the daily practices of her religious beliefs in Taiwanese multiple religious traditions. The content of the folktales and religious stories reflect certain beliefs of multiple religious traditions embedded in Taiwanese society, and Ian’s grandmother practiced these traditions in her Gods’ Room on a daily basis (Figure 5.1). Ian’s grandmother’s regular religious practices at home apparently reinforce his belief in good and bad supernatural beings. Hence, Ian’s direct and daily interactions with his grandmother’s storytelling and religious practices account for the influence of Taiwanese social and cultural contexts on his identity formation.
6.2.4 Multimodality of preschoolers’ narratives as a means of obtaining insights into their lived experience of resilience

The last theme of exploring narratives of resilience discusses the diverse forms preschoolers used in expressing their narratives, called “multimodality” (Puroila et al., 2012a, p. 192). Although this theme is not derived from exploring the content of children’s narratives, multimodality provides insights into the importance of using diverse narrative forms in understanding children’s lived experiences in relation to resilience. This is because the characteristic of multimodality in children’s narrative indicates their narratives are credible and consistent (Kinnunen & Puroila, 2016; Puroila et al., 2012a; Spyrou, 2011). Through the analysis of children’s multimodal expressions, such as verbal and writing narratives, non-verbal emotional expressions and even silence, the understanding of children’s lived experiences can be deepened and the credibility of my interpretation in their narratives of resilience enhanced (Puroila et al., 2012b).

Initially, when children use these multimodal ways to express themselves and communicate with others, they learn to adjust to different circumstances they encounter in their environments, which is an important developmental task for the development of children’s resilience. This was evident in all of my participants in this study. For instance, Kelvin’s negative emotional expressions, such as anger, irritation, complaining, and fighting with his peers, demonstrated his inadequacy to deal with the loss of competitions or learning activities (Extract 4.24 and 4.25). However, Kelvin used both forms of verbal and writing narratives, such as talking, singing, and drawing, to present his solutions for his anger. In the discussion of the resilience-orientated story, Kelvin’s solution to his anger ‘Da La Da La Da’ singing, followed by his movement of Hawaiian hula dance, made everyone laugh (Extract 4.27). This narrative combines positive emotional expression and body language with his singing and posturing. Researchers highlight that children’s emotional expression is an important way of showing their communication with others (Emde, 2003; Puroila et al., 2012a), and Kelvin’s emotions become the form of his alternative narrative in communication and of constructing meaning of his lived experience. This emotional communication is one of
the main functions of adjustment in early childhood (Emde, 2003) which helps children to develop their resilience.

Additionally, this study indicates that the role of drawing in multimodal forms of children’s narratives is as important as verbal narrative forms. This is because drawing as an art expression of writing narratives is also regarded as a means of constructing meanings in children’s narratives (Cox, 2005; Hopperstad, 2010; Kinnunen & Einarsdottir, 2013; Puroila et al., 2012a; Soundy, 2012; Wright, 2011), and because the content of most of the participant children’s drawings was highly concordant with their verbal narrative. This finding supports that children’s narrative studies have adequate credibility and their voices deserve to be heard (Kinnunen & Puroila, 2016; Puroila et al., 2012a; Spyrou, 2011). The evident examples that children’s drawings are the counterpart of their verbal narratives are shown in Howard’s drawing (Figure 4.4) illustrating precisely his verbal narrative of parental separation (Extract 4.12), and in Ian’s narrative of his fear of the darkness (Extract 4.64) in contrast with his drawing (Figure 4.19).

In this study, it was shown that drawing can capture young children’s inner world when they might not be able to express it verbally, and the content of the drawing might thus be constructed to represent their identities. Children’s drawing is the process of making meaning and sense of their lives and experiences (Bragg, 2011; Einarsdottir et al., 2009; Hopperstad, 2010; Soundy, 2012; Wright, 2011). For example, Howard drew two homes, himself in one of the two houses, and an arrow in between them, on his worksheet where the children at Rabbit Class showed their thoughts about the story they read in the Parent-Child Reading activity (Figure 4.4). This figure reflects three aspects of meaning-making in his lived experience. The first points out Howard’s lived experience of having two homes, which implied his parents were not living together. The second meaning-making in his drawing that was symbolic, and was not indicated in his verbal narrative, was the arrow as a metaphor for visiting his father. In the third aspect of meaning-making the interpretation of the only human figure presented in this drawing was Howard’s emergent identity as a child commuting between his father and mother’s house due to parental separation. The findings of Howard’s writing narrative is congruent with Bragg (2011) arguing that “youth voice can be heard more directly
through images, and thus the visual methods give a more privileged ‘inside’ perspective than others, allowing young people to speak for themselves” (p. 89).

Multimodal narrative expressions in children’s narratives reveal some children’s inadequate verbal narrative. This study observed that despite the lack of verbal expression, through writing narratives, the changes in the content of children’s drawings showed the progress of their resilience development. Wright (2011) contends that “drawing surfaces what children already know, what they are grappling with and what they are motivated to explore further” (pp. 171-172). As Timothy’s drawings illustrate his interests and understanding of heroes in the films (Figure 4.12 and 4.13), over a few months, the change of his drawing contents from the dominant media to teachers’ storytelling and resilience-orientated stories has shown the progression of his learning motivation and emergent writing (Figure 4.14).

Furthermore, silence as a non-verbal narrative and a meaningful form of multimodal expressions implies the difference of participants’ attitudes in this study. In light of the argument of Ghorashi (2008), Puroila et al. (2012a), and Rogers et al. (1999), salient silence and changing the way of an individual expression, are subtle indicators for narrative researchers to pay more attention to the embodied contexts of silence. This study revealed that the change of Howard’s narrative attitude from joyfully talkative to quiet and silence caught my attention when I asked him about the absence of his mother from the weekend trip (Extract 4.9). Rogers et al. (1999, p. 79) specified that the language of silence in communication, and through gestures and facial expressions at the moment of “the unsaid,” is the least explicit evidence in narrative analysis and interpretation. Howard’s silence here may imply different meanings, such as the fact that he might not want to talk about the situation due to his shame of parents’ divorce, or that he might not know the reason for the parental separation (Extract 4.9). This is because “silences in conversations have different meaning and play different roles” (Rogers et al., 1999, p. 101). The unsaid could indicate a fear of speaking about something that is taboo or forbidden in a specific cultural context (Rogers et al., 1999), or as in Ghorashi’s study (2008), which identified two types of refugees’ silences were frequently combined with traumatic emotions, which were “indescribable” and “incomprehensible” (p. 126). Inconsistent with these studies, there was no evidence
showing that Howard realized his parents’ divorce was a taboo subject, or whether he was severely emotionally traumatized by it. However, Howard’s silence and attitude when he initially mentioned his parents not living together was changed in comparison with later when he engaged in teachers’ storytelling and resilience-orientated stories. The initial silence and attitude change was a meaningful implication to explore its meaning.

Using diverse narrative forms in understanding children’s lived experiences in relation to resilience highlights that young children are capable narrators. Through analyzing multimodality of preschoolers’ narratives, the interpretation of the five children’s resilience stories is credible and trustworthy. This is because the forms of children’s writing and non-verbal narratives can support verbal narratives in order to deepen the understanding of their lived experiences, especially children’s drawings capturing their inner world and showing that they construct meaning of their identities.

In summary, the exploration of RO1 reveals the four important themes in the first part of the discussion. Initially, the role of teachers’ storytelling is an effective pedagogy to promote the development of children’s resilience, in particular when resonance among the topics and content of the resilience-orientated stories, the teachers’ storytelling strategies, and children’s lived experiences has been built. Establishing children’s resonance with the stories the teachers told, the positive influence of their life difficulties on their resilience development can be promoted. Secondly, through the storytelling interactions between the five participant children, their teachers and classmates, and the researcher, a collaborative construction in the children’s narratives is important. This is because the collaboration in children’s narratives affords the space where their competence can be seen and positive thinking can be promoted. Furthermore, this study revealed that the relationship between children’s resilience and their identities in their early years is complementary. When they manifest their resilience, their identities are more positive and vice versa. Also, the formation of children’s identities is influenced and reinforced by the daily interactions with their ecologies. Lastly, although the importance of multimodal narrative expressions are not directly associated with the content of children’s narratives of resilience, through the analysis of children’s multimodal narratives, the credibility of the interpretation of the
five children’s resilience stories can be assured. This study is commensurate with Daniel’s claim (2012) of storytelling as being “at the heart of children’s lives in the way they recount events and make sense of the world around them” (p. 10). Through engaging in teachers’ storytelling and story discussions, the participant children manifested their resilience in diverse ways. Through listening and understanding children’s narratives, RO1 concluded with the four themes as aforementioned.

6.3 RO2: Towards New Understanding: Sources of Resilience

After the children’s narratives of resilience were analysed as a whole (RO1), RO2 focuses on the exploration of some influential elements and interactions between individuals and the elements on the resilience development revealed in the content of children’s narratives. Through the lens of BEST, RO2 aims to explore the influential elements on the development of preschoolers’ resilience and to understand the interactions between these elements. The exploration of RO2 indicates that preschoolers’ resilience development is influenced by several elements, and by the interactions among these elements through the lens of BEST. The findings of RO2 afford an opportunity to reconsider the conventional definition of resilience, and give an insight into the understanding of the roles of cultural contexts, belief systems, and differences in the experience of, and influences on, resilience of preschoolers in a non-Western nation such as Taiwan. The BEST framework enables these understandings to be foregrounded in a systematic way; the complexity of the interactions between individuals and the influential elements in the findings of RO2, however, points to the limitation of BEST.

This discussion section begins with an emerging construct of resilience in early childhood that is based on the two exceptional findings and supports the current resilience literature, and then follows by discussing the influential elements (Figure 6.1) and the interactions of these (Figure 6.2).
6.3.1 An emerging construct of resilience in early childhood development

The findings of this study argue that the participant children can manifest their resilience when two conditions are achieved, such as changing the way researchers evaluate ‘risk’ and target their environments instead of the children, and extending adequate and accessible resources in accordance with cultural contexts. Even though a significant amount of research in resilience contends that children with a disability are regarded as having a risk factor affecting their resilience (Linke & Radich, 2010; Schoon, 2006; Werner & Smith, 2001), and the development of children’s resilience in single-parent families due to parents’ divorce is challenging (Hetherington, 2006), this study took advantage of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome and Howard growing up in a single-mother family as exceptional examples in order to investigate the emerging construct of resilience during early age. Victor and Howard’s findings are commensurate with Ungar’s perspective of social ecology of resilience (2011). Ungar’s decentrality (2011) points out that an individual’s resilience should focus on how well the individual can apply his/her “environmental resources” instead of judging “the victim of toxic environments” (p. 5). Therefore, Victor and Howard’s resilience stories support the concept of decentrality as “the environment is even more critical to child development than a child’s individual traits” (Ungar, 2011, p. 4).

Focus on environmental risks rather than individuals in risk environments

The initial condition that should be achieved in this study is to rethink the evaluation of children’s resilience in a marginalized group. Resilience often refers to a positive outcome of an individual’s capacity to successfully adapt in spite of high risk circumstances (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Lerner et al., 2012; Luthar et al., 2000; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006). This conventional definition of resilience includes two judgements. Evaluating a threat or risk circumstances an individual exposed to is one, and an evaluation of the individual’s successful adaption from the threats is the other (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Masten et al., 2013; Masten & Obradović, 2006). However, there has been argument over these two judgements as their evaluation criteria has naturally excluded
marginalized groups from being resilient (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013; Young et al., 2008). There is some evidence from the current literature, and from the findings of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome and of Howard growing up in a single family in this study, to support the idea that the majority of children are able to manifest their resilience, even in marginalized groups.

Firstly, children with disabilities tend to have a higher risk factor for their resilience when viewed in parallel with certain environmental risks. As the findings of the well-known Kauai Longitudinal study conducted by Werner and Smith (2001), children with disabilities were often living in poverty, experienced parental mental issues, and/or persistently poor conditions in their environments. That led the children to be at-risk. This did not happen in the case of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome. Similarly, the combination between children in single-parent families and single parents suffering from financial hardship, especially single mothers, have been shown to increase the likelihood of being at-risk (Sayer, 2006). In this study, however, Howard’s mother was a public high school teacher who had very stable and adequate income, which helped her maintain their quality of life following divorce.

Secondly, consistent with Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) and Young et al. (2008), disabled environments cause more negative outcomes rather than the child’s personal condition itself. It was evident in this study that Victor with Asperger’s syndrome had a similar challenge with preschool-context barriers, which created a risk learning environment. The context barrier at Dolphin Class encompassed the two teachers’ lack of knowledge of Asperger’s syndrome, and the overcrowded curriculum. Initially, with little understanding of Asperger’s disorder (Extract 4.56), Victor’s teachers required him to follow normative classroom standard, did not realize Victor’s individual needs, and expected Victor to act and behave as other preschoolers. As a result, Victor was bullied causing negative emotional tension between him and his peers (Extract 4.53). Additionally, the overcrowded curriculum in Dolphin class did not serve Victor’s special needs. Conversely, this crowded learning arrangement often conflicted with his learning preference and persistent behaviour. This contradiction between his learning interests and needs, and overcrowded curriculum often resulted in his irritation with angry and violent outbursts, leading to a vicious circle for his interpersonal
relationships (Extract 4.51, 4.52, and 4.53). Hence, these barriers should be viewed as a disabled environment in the development of Victor’s resilience.

Thirdly, this study confirms that when researchers assess the resilience of children with disabilities, neither ‘expected’ nor ‘exceptional’ achievement should be a criterion, which is in line with Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) and Young et al. (2008). As Masten and Obradović (2006) have questioned the evaluation of good adaption, it is an essential key to determine whether individuals with special needs can be resilient. This was evident in Victor’s case because he would never be deemed to have resilience if I had evaluated his resilience within normative expectations, such as well-developed interpersonal interaction skills, adjustment to a group learning style at preschool, and the appropriateness of emotional expressions. Or if I had collected his data the same way I used to access other children’s narratives by group interviews and tell-and-draw strategies, or observing his collaborative narrative, the finding of Victor’s resilience story would not be expected. In order to rethink the appropriateness of using normative expectations, Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) also provided examples from their narrative study, such as a narrative story mentioning that a boy with no bladder was bullied at school, but his reaction was actively against his bullying situation. This example would not be recognized as a resilience story because the schoolboy was not associated with outcomes of normative expectations, such as successful scholastic performance and peaceful interpersonal relationship with peers (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013). Similarly, deaf schoolchildren have been asked to demonstrate good adjustment and academic achievement the same as non-deaf students in order to be recognized as resilient in Young’s report (2008). This evaluation of resilience is a unitary and arbitrary judgement without considering contexts of marginalized populations (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013; Ungar, 2004, 2012, 2013; Young et al., 2008).

Lastly, even though children achieve expected outcomes, they may be still at-risk. Therefore, ‘expected’ and ‘exceptional’ achievements or normative expectations cannot be the only criterion of resilience. As in Howard’s example, his performances in his academic learning and social development were desirable outcomes; however, it did not mean Howard did not emotionally suffer from his parents’ divorce. These desirable
academic outcomes are too narrow to evaluate children’s risks and resilience, which might lead to missing out on an opportunity to provide assistance. This is because under this simple criterion of evaluating resilience, Howard’s occasional expressions of unstable emotions and unsatisfied emotional needs would not be able to seen as an important sign.

Consequently, the criteria for evaluating children’s resilience are crucial because it might unintentionally exclude a certain population. As a result, this study argues that although children with disabilities or living in single-parent families are potential risks, the development of their resilience is possible. This is because adequate and accessible resources in their ecologies have been provided, which is discussed in the next section.

**Providing adequate and accessible resources**

As this study proposes that the five participant children can manifest their resilience, the second condition needed to achieve this is extending adequate and accessible resources in accordance with unique social and cultural contexts. Once useful and accessible resources have been extended, children with disabilities or in a single-parent family can perform as well as others. As the negative outcomes these children encountered result from unfriendly environmental, attitudinal, systemic and psychological factors, Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) and Young et al. (2008) believe that creating a suitable environment with available resources to access would decrease the likelihood of children with disabilities being at-risk. In this regard, children living in single-parent families can also avoid being vulnerable when their single parents can access useful resources. As in the study conducted by Levine (2009), the findings showed that the majority of the single mothers of children with disabilities recognized their family support as the most important resource. In Victor and Howard’s cases, there are two types of resources to promote the development of their resilience.

Firstly, family resources are essential. This was evident in both Victor and Howard’s examples. Victor and Howard’s grandparents provided significant childcare for their parents. This grandparental involvement provided assistance in housework and preschool drop-off/pick-up when parents needed it. With the resources of extended
families on hand, some potentially negative consequences mentioned in the aforementioned studies, that Victor and Howard might have suffered, were mitigated.

Secondly, preschool resources are important. As the first part of the discussion mentioned, the effective teachers’ storytelling, providing the topics of the resilience-orientated stories can resonate with readers’ lived experiences, the story and storytelling are a resource for development of children’s resilience. For instance, through the stories, Howard’s mother found the way to talk about her divorce with Howard. With the stories, Howard could understand his parental separation and comforted his emotional needs (Extract 4.15). Additionally, Victor’s preschool resource was his teachers who created an opportunity for volunteer storytelling time so that the outstanding reading competence of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome could be recognized (Extract 4.60). Without providing this resource as a special curriculum arrangement, Victor’s peers and teachers would not have been able to realize his competence and transform their perceptions of Victor as a result of his impressive storytelling.

In these two exceptional examples, having available resources, such as extended family support, appropriate curriculum arrangement, the use of resilience-orientated stories, and caring teachers at both preschools played an important role in moderating the negative impacts of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome, and Howard in a divorced family. Consistent with Ungar (2011, p. 6) who asserted that “in higher risk environments, resilience is more dependent on the availability and accessibility of culturally relevant resources than individual factors”, the findings of this study suggest that the five participant preschoolers can manifest their resilience as long as they can effectively access the helpful resources in the risk circumstances and environments.

This emerging construct of resilience extends the understanding of the definition of resilience in early childhood. This is because this study focuses on preschoolers’ progress in their life difficulties and provides resilience-orientated stories and teachers’ storytelling as useful resources to facilitate the development of their resilience.

To sum up, Victor and Howard’s exceptional examples foregrounded the role of grandparents as significant alternative caregivers and highlighted the importance of extended families. These resources, as some of influential elements on the development of preschoolers’ resilience are embedded in the unique cultural contexts in Taiwan. In
the next section, the discussion of several influential elements on children’s resilience will be presented. These elements highlight the importance of the cultural awareness and the social and cultural contexts in Taiwan.

6.3.2 Redefined influential elements embody the importance of the cultural context

As the two exceptions bring insights into the understandings of the construct of resilience in the early years and of the resources in the Taiwanese social and cultural context, this section discusses influential elements on children’s resilience that were revealed in the five participants’ narratives in the three Taiwanese public preschool settings. The elements encompass an individual level and contextual levels. From an individual level, the influence of their disabilities on the resilience of children with disabilities has been discussed, whereas learning motivation as a protective element is reviewed in this section. From the contextual level, the discussions of families (parents’ expectation, grandparents’ parenting styles, and functions of extended families), cram schools and preschools, media, multiple religious traditions, education reform, and a social welfare system in Taiwan will be embedded in this unique social and cultural context. In light of the definitions of the ecological systems in BEST, some discussed elements are indicated in Figure 6.2. However, although the media was defined as an exosystem in accordance with BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), this finding indicates that the relationship between individuals and the media has changed in the Digital Age. RO2 also revealed that some influential elements, such as extended families, cram schools, and multiple religious traditions, explicitly reflect aspects of the Taiwanese social and cultural context, which enriches the content of BEST.
Figure 6.2 Influential elements on resilience in individual, Microsystems, exosystems and macrosystems
Learning motivation as a significant sign to evaluate preschoolers’ risks

This study indicates that preschoolers’ learning motivation as an influential element on evaluating children’s resilience is more important than their scholastic performance. This is because academic performance is not the most important developmental task in early childhood and does not guarantee that there is no risk, as in Howard’s example abovementioned, but also because motivations can successfully predict students’ scholastic achievement beyond their intelligence. In other words, motivations in school learning are critical to academic performance, which is congruent with Martin (2002) and Steinmayr and Spinath (2009). Furthermore, consistent with Werner (2006), high learning motivation in this study as a protective element is one of the individual attributes to facilitate the development of children’s resilience. The five participant children demonstrated high learning motivation when engaging in teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories. The effectiveness of the storytelling and the way in which stories facilitate the development of their resilience are discussed in detail in 6.2.1.

More importantly, intrinsic motivations are better than extrinsic ones because the latter might affect an individual’s future learning autonomy. In this study, the drawback of Kelvin’s extrinsic motivation was indicated that he had difficulties to deal with his anger after his perceived loss of competitions. Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 56) defined intrinsic motivations as “the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions”, whereas an extrinsic motivation refers to an action or behaviour occurring from outside the individual, such as tangible rewards. In this study, Kelvin’s learning motivation was highly driven by different kinds of rewards, such as playing longer in the preschool playgrounds (Extract 4.23), or gaining stickers and toys in his cram schools (Extract 4.26). As a result, Kelvin’s motivation was more extrinsic than the others. Due to the overuse of behavioural reinforcement in Kelvin’s cram school, his extrinsic motivation might affect his future autonomy to learn, and result in him having difficulty dealing with loss of a competition (Extract 4.26).

Children’s low learning motivation is not only a negative element on their resilience, but also a warning about the consequence of other risk factors. This was evident in Timothy’s case that his low learning motivation at Countryside Preschool
showed in Mathematics and Mandarin Phonetic Symbols classes in particular (Extract 4.41). Additionally, it was a risk that his learning performance was poorer than others. However, his low learning motivation likely resulted from spending excessive time on media at home (Extract 4.42). Through understanding the reason of Timothy’s low learning motivation as an influential element on his resilience development, the use of the media was detected, which is discussed later.

**Grandparents and extended families as influential elements of a cultural heritage**

Family is one of the most paramount resources of resilience (Breitkreuz et al., 2014; Ungar, 2008, 2012; Vilsaint, Aiyer, Wilson, Shaw, & Dishion, 2013; Werner, 2006), and one of the most influential settings on child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Due to the importance of families in child development, consistent with the literature, the findings of this study confirm that available and accessible family resources can enhance an individual’s resilience despite facing adversities (Ungar, 2008, 2012; Werner, 2006). The family resources in Taiwan are culturally influenced by the roles of extended families and the reasons for grandparental involvement in sharing childcare and housework. The findings of the family supports and resources consist of extended family members (Breitkreuz et al., 2014; Walsh, 2016; Werner & Smith, 2001), family financial stability (McConnell, Savage, & Breitkreuz, 2014; Walsh, 1996), and a sense of coherence, cohesion, connectedness and security (Downie et al., 2010; Ungar, 2012; Walsh, 1996; Werner, 2006), which are discussed in this section respectively.

In light of grandparents in extended families serving as an important influence on children’s resilience in this study, the role of the extended family has an exclusive cultural meaning in Taiwan. This is because there are differences in the relevant literatures between the Western and Taiwanese cultural contexts. The first major distinction between Western and Taiwanese cultures is the nature of grandparental involvement with grandchildren. In the Western literature, the majority of the involvement of grandparents in their grandchildren’s daily lives is likely to be during a crisis situation when the parents cannot exercise their parenting rights or lose custody, such as being accused of child abuse, drug addiction, prison sentences or the death of a
parent (Williams, 2011). Also, the increased rate of divorce (Williams, 2011), and an increase in women’s employment (Geurts, Van Tilburg, Poortman, & Dykstra, 2015; Jappens & Van Bavel, 2012; Williams, 2011) are also reasons to have grandparental involvement.

However, this study revealed that grandparental involvement with grandchildren in extended families has been broadly practiced in a Taiwanese society, which is commensurate with grandparents’ literature in the Taiwanese context (Chen, 2016; Hermalin, Roan, & Perez, 1998; Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010). Due to the Confucius tradition in Chinese culture, filial piety as an important cultural heritage has been the core of three or more generations residing together in an extended family (Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010). From the perspective of filial piety, for adult children, looking after their elder parents is a primary obligation. In contrast, for grandparents, caring for grandchildren is not only the essential function of co-residence but more importantly is culturally anticipated and imperative (Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010). As a result, besides the practical needs of grandparental involvement shown in Western literature, co-resident grandparents in a Taiwanese household are part of this particular cultural background. As seen, except in Kelvin’s case, the grandparents of the other four participants in this study are profoundly involved in their grandchildren’s lived experiences. Howard’s grandparents lived close by whereas Timothy, Victor, and Ian stayed with their grandparents in extended families. The reason for these grandparents to be co-resident cannot compare with the typical grandparental involvement in Western culture.

Another cultural difference in this grandparental involvement is, due to a patriarchal society in Taiwan, paternal grandparents reside with their grandchildren more than maternal ones in Taiwan, which is in line with the literature (Dunn et al., 2006; Hermalin et al., 1998; Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010). In the USA, the majority of grandparents do not reside with their children and grandchildren as the statistics showed approximately 8% of grandparents lived with their grandchildren in 2012 (Dunifon, Ziol-Guest, & Kopko, 2014); in Europe, 7% of grandparents lived in a three-generational household in 2011 (Jappens & Van Bavel, 2012); in Australia, only 5% of co-resident grandparents resided in extended families in 2015 (Australian
Institute of Family Studies, 2016). Closer analysis of these statistics indicates that these grandparents in Western nations residing with the two younger generations are from the maternal side with a specific involvement in caring for their daughters’ children (e.g. Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2016; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2007; Geurts et al., 2015). Nevertheless, compared with the low rate of these co-resident grandparents in Western countries, despite at least three-generational co-resident rate declining from roughly 50% in 1996 (Hermalin et al., 1998) to 32% in 2010 (Pong & Chen, 2010), the vast majority of these grandparents in Taiwan are from the paternal side (Hermalin et al., 1998; Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010).

In this study, Howard’s alternative caregivers are his maternal grandparents while Timothy, Victor, and Ian reside with their paternal grandparents. Again, the high likelihood of paternal grandparental involvement is rooted in the values of the Confucius culture and Taiwanese patriarchal society (Mjelde-Mossey, 2007; Pong & Chen, 2010; Yi, Pan, Chang, & Chan, 2006). Yi et al. (2006) interpreted one of the most significant concept of filial piety in this patriarchal relations as “sons rather than daughters are more likely to assume the responsibility of major care for elderly parents, whereas daughters may perform the substitute role” (p. 1044). Pong and Chen (2010) and Brown (1996) also claimed that elders prefer to stay with their adult sons. This can effectively explain more existence of paternal grandparental involvement than maternal ones in this study.

Although paternal co-resident grandparents in the three-generational arrangement in Taiwan are more common than maternal grandparents, the role of mothers’ parents in caring for their grandchildren is still important, particularly in a single-mother family. The assistance of the maternal grandparents in Howard’s case are congruent with both Western and Taiwanese literature (e.g. Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2016; Chen, 2016; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2007). In spite of the low rate of co-resident grandparents in Western nations abovementioned, the bulk of these grandparents provided more reliable childcare for their daughters as single mothers (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2016; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2007; Geurts et al., 2015). This co-resident grandparent with a single-mother family may be of considerable benefit to the development of young children’s resilience.
(Breitkreuz et al., 2014; Levine, 2009) because the grandparent is not only a childcare provider, but also a supplier of resources (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2016; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2007; Geurts et al., 2015).

In addition, the influence of grandparental involvement in the Taiwanese context is stronger than in Western nations. As noted above, with more three-generational cohabitation arrangements as a more common family structure in Taiwan than in Western countries, the influence of grandparents on their grandchildren is more direct through their daily interactions than those grandparents who visit regularly or care for certain hours during a week (Dunifon, 2013; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2007; Geurts et al., 2015). This assertion is consistent with the concept of a microsystem in BEST as Bronfenbrenner (1993, 1994) highlights that the more direct interactions an individual has with his/her caregivers, the more strongly both are influencing and influenced by one another. For this reason, grandparental involvement and grandparents parenting styles apparently impacted on Timothy and Ian’s lived experience in relation to their development of resilience in this study.

In this study, with respect to co-resident grandparents parenting styles, Timothy’s grandparents and Ian’s grandmother influenced them in different ways: having a sense of connectedness; over-indulging; frightened into behaving; and given role models through religious storytelling to achieve desired behaviours in the child. Initially, strong connectedness with grandparents is a protective element of resilience development. This was because Timothy’s relationship with his grandparents ensured that he could still go to preschool and satisfied his needs when his parents were unemployed (Extract 4.36). This finding is in line with literature of resilience that the closeness of a grandparent-grandchild relationship as an intimate bond effectively protects grandchildren throughout their biological family crises (Akhtar, Malik, & Begeer, 2016; Sands, Goldberg-Glen, & Shin, 2009; Werner & Smith, 1992, 2001).

In addition to grandparents’ attitude towards their grandchildren, this study revealed that it might be a risk because the grandparents are more flexible, tolerant, and likely to spoil them than the parents. Although the study by Downie et al. (2010) was conducted in grandfamilies which refer to grandparents independently caring for their grandchildren in households, rather than in three-generational households, the
grandchildren were spoilt materially. Consistent with the finding of Downie et al. (2010), Timothy’s grandfather also spoilt him materially because he could distinguish between the different parenting styles of his parents and grandparents who brought him toys when he asked them to (Extract 4.35) and who allowed him excessive and unsupervised viewing of inappropriate TV programs (Extract 4.47). Despite the fact that material satisfaction was viewed as a protective factor in the study of Downie et al. (2010), the freedom of selecting the use and content of the media was identified as a concern in this study.

Furthermore, although the understanding of parenting among co-resident grandparents in both Western and Taiwanese literatures is limited (Chen & Li, 2006; Dunifon et al., 2014), this study contributes to a deep understanding of grandparents’ parenting in three-generational households. For instance, Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling as her parenting strategy might be considered to be both positive and negative impacts on Ian’s resilience. From a positive point of view, the story of Buddha told by Ian’s grandmother demonstrated a role model to Ian, but also implied expected behaviour. Fishel (2015) stated that storytelling is part of our daily life and “the primary way we make sense of the world” (p. 1). The likelihood of Ian’s grandmother telling Buddha’s story was that she was influenced by her religious beliefs and daily practices in her Gods’ room at home (Figure 5.1). Through her daily practice and beliefs, Ian’s grandmother adopted the story of Buddha to be one of her parenting strategies. The influence of this religious tradition on Ian’s resilience is discussed later.

Although there was no evidence to show the impact of Buddha’s story in Ian’s narrative, from a negative perspective, the finding of Ian’s grandmother’s frightening parenting style might be cause for concern. Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling also included other evil spirits (Extract 4.70). Ian’s narrative showed that his grandmother told stories in relation to ghosts or demons in order to persuade Ian to behave. Spaulding (2011, p. 135) believed that using stories to “manipulate” anyone is wrong because “children who were told tales and developed their own pictures in their minds were able to unconsciously project themselves into the story and could therefore use the subconsciously psychological messages of the story if and when they need them” (Bettelheim, cited in Spaulding, 2011, p. 136). This can be interpreted that when Miss
Sunny asked about the experience of fear, Ian expressed his fear of ghosts, monsters and devils, some of which derived from his grandmother’s storytelling. This is because his grandmother attempted to manipulate Ian’s bad behaviour. Although Fishel (2015) and Fredericks (2003) propose that frightening storytelling can enhance children’s resilience, in this case, the storytelling as one of Ian’s grandmother’s parenting styles, became a concern as a cause of Ian’s fear.

**Cram schools as a unique context in a Taiwanese educational culture**

This study found that cram schools were an influential element on the development of children’s resilience. Through exploring the influence of cram schools, the element is strongly associated with its unique cultural context in a Taiwanese educational history, which affects parents’ expectations and alternative childcare choices for their children. The existence of cram schools in Taiwanese society has its historically and socially contextual background. The historical examination system in the Chinese culture has endured more than a thousand years, meaning that education plays a determinative role (Yang, 1995). With this superior social value influenced by Chinese Confucianism, students pursue great academic achievement to honour their families (Stevenson & Stigler, 2006; Yang, 1995). This Confucian perspective also emphasizes the importance of effort and hard work in order to achieve one’s goal (Stevenson & Stigler, 2006). As a result, cram schools in Taiwan have been developed in this cultural context in order for students to prepare and succeed in entrance examinations in higher education (Chen & Lu, 2009; Shih & Yi, 2014; Yang, 1995). Following industrialization, double-income families have increased and this necessitated after-school care arrangements for their children due to these parents’ long working hours (Hsiao & Kuo, 2013). The majority of school-age children participate in cram school systems in Taiwan (Tsai & Kuo, 2008), and the trend of children going to cram schools has extended into the early years (Li, 2004). In this educational context of cram schools, three out of five children in this study attended different cram schools for various reasons after preschool. In these children’s lived experiences, cram schools affected the development of their resilience both negatively and positively in individual circumstances.
In terms of positive influences, with such traditional education values, one of the most important roles of cram schools in education in Taiwan is to fulfil parents’ expectations for their children’s academic attainment. There are different types of cram schools in Taiwan for various purposes, such as learning arts or sports as extracurricular activities, as they are called in Western nations, studying foreign languages, reinforcing academic subjects in Chinese, Mathematics, Science, and pre-primary school academic preparation. In Kelvin’s case, Kelvin’s parents certainly had high expectations for his scholastic performance so they sent Kelvin to academic-orientated cram schools prior to his enrolment of preschool (Extract 5.1). Due to the long-hour attendance of his cram school, his academic performance was better than most of his classmates in Rabbit Classroom. As expected, the more time children devote to their homework and academic-orientated cram schools, the higher scholastic performance they could achieve (Chen & Lu, 2009).

Moreover, the positive influence of cram schools on the development of children’s resilience is extending the integration between alternative childcare services and children’s interests in extracurricular learning. These cram schools offer both education and childcare services after school hours when the majority of the parents are still at work. In other words, after school children’s safety can be guaranteed in a cram school and they can learn something they are interested in. This was evident that Howard participated in a music cram school and Victor learnt arts as his after-school activity. These extracurricular activities were short and flexible in order to correspond with Howard’s mother’s and Victor’s grandmother’s pick-up time.

In terms of a negative influence, due to the overuse of a token system as behaviour and classroom management in cram schools, this study revealed that the consequence of children’s behaviour after experiencing this management style might result in interpersonal challenges, in particular when they do not know how to deal with the loss of a competition. This is because when children are used to being in academic-orientated cram schools that highlight students’ scholastic achievement by encouraging competitions and reinforcing relatively better learning outcomes, their behaviours are shaped by this management. This was evident in Kelvin’s case. Besides the concern of his extrinsic learning motivation influenced by the cram school management as
abovementioned, Kelvin was keen to engage in a competition due to the promise of a reward after winning. However, he had difficulties dealing with it when perceiving a loss at preschool. His negative emotional reactions, such as irritation, complaints, and quarrelling with his peers led to a challenge for his interpersonal relationship (Extract 4.25). As Kwok (2004) concluded, the existence of cram schools in the five Asian regions, including Taiwan, challenged the formal educational system provided by the Ministry of Education because the cram schools could transform children’s learning attitudes in their formal educational settings, yet, little is known about the effect of classroom management and teaching methods in cram school contexts in Taiwan on young children’s resilience.

Multiple religious traditions as irreplaceable social and cultural contexts

In line with the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter 2, the social and cultural context of multiple religions has been embedded in Taiwan. This study not only indicated that Taiwanese multiple religious traditions affected children’s resilience through observing their close family members’ practices of the traditions, but also argued that how these traditions are presented and practiced to young children determines whether their resilience is influenced positively or negatively. Initially, the understanding of the influence of multiple religious traditions on the development of children’s resilience is through some family members’ practices, such as worshiping Gods twice a day and visiting temples regularly. This was evident in Ian’s case as his grandmother was a sincere practitioner of multiple religious traditions, not only in the Gods’ room at home (Figure 5.3) but also in temples. As noted, Ian’s lived experience was involved in this unique cultural context through observing his grandmother’s daily worship, listening to stories of supernatural beings and religions, and sometimes joining specific ceremonies in temples (Extract 4.71). In the previous discussion section of the grandparents as an influential element, Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling in relation to Buddha and supernatural beings as her parenting style possibly resulted from her religious and folk beliefs. Through daily interaction with his grandmother and observing her worships as religious practices at home, the impact of her folktales and religious stories on Ian’s fear and belief of the supernatural beings could be reinforced. This was
because some of the multiple religious traditions in Taiwan are involved in worshipping ghosts (Extract 5.6).

Moreover, the finding of this study provided insights into the understandings of both negative and positive influences of multiple religious traditions on the development of children’s resilience. This is because the way Taiwanese multiple religious traditions appear and are practiced determines whether the effect of this influential element on children’s resilience is positive or negative. From the perspective of a negative influence, the appearance of this element as the tradition of Ghost Month (Extract 5.6) indirectly affects Ian’s fear of supernatural beings, such as ghosts, monsters, evil spirits and so forth. This negative impact on Ian’s resilience is partially congruent with Fredericks’s argument (2003) that traditional frightening folktales cannot promote resilience.

Conversely, from the perspective of a positive influence, multiple religious traditions shape role models through religious stories and involve diverse examples of moral judgement, such as good or bad and evil or goodness, which might affect children’s emergent identities. The way Taiwanese multiple religious traditions act as a positive element is also through storytelling and religious practices. This was evident in Buddha’s story told by Ian’s grandmother. Through telling both frightening and role modeling stories, and worshipping Gods at home and in temples (Extract 5.6), Ian’s moral judgement of good and bad might be affected. This might also impact on his emergent identity, which was one of the themes discussed in RO1.

The findings extend the new understanding of the influence of Taiwanese multiple religious traditions on children’s resilience because little is known about how religions, diverse cultural traditions, and their practices influence children’s resilience in both Western and Taiwanese literatures. Despite few studies on the religious influence, Glicken (2006) has advocated that the influence of religious involvement on one’s resilience tends to be positive. For instance, Bible stories providing role models comfort youths going through hardships in Southern Africa (Gunnestad & Thwala, 2011). This is partially consistent with the findings of Taiwanese multiple religious traditions as an influential element in this study. However, this influential element also influences children’s resilience negatively. As a result, the insight into the understanding of
multiple religious traditions in Taiwan contributes to the body of knowledge in resilience literature.

**Ubiquitous media as a direct influence on preschoolers’ resilience**

The findings of this study argue that the influence of using media, such as watching TV and movies, and playing games on tablets or smartphones on preschoolers’ lived experience is apparent and direct rather than an indirect influence as Bronfenbrenner defined in 1977. In light of Bronfenbrenner’s definition of the exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1993, 1994), media is an indirect influence on an individual’s development. However, as we are living in an era of easily accessible cutting-edge technologies and affordable digital products, the media ubiquitously influences our daily life (Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012; Davidson, Lefebvre, Morris, Nieman, & Swift, 2003). The development of technology has been remarkable over the past two decades, and the global penetration rate of media usage in the 21st century cannot compare with that of 1977 when Bronfenbrenner defined mass media as an exosystem component. This study proved that all of the participants’ multimodal narratives of resilience were directly affected by the media. The first evidence appears in Timothy’s drawings of Transformers and Wolverine (Figure 4.12 and 4.13). Consistent with Götz (2014), the content of children’s drawings related to a number of images often derived from the media, such as Batman, superheroes with Pokemon Belts and so forth. These topics of their drawings are not occasioned by their imaginations, but steadily embedded via the media in their daily lives. Similarly, Ian’s knowledge of astronomy, and some information of monsters and evil in his narratives were derived from the news and cartoons on TV (Extract 4.69). The multimodality of children’s narratives reflects preschoolers’ lived experiences in relation to their immediate exposures of the media.

Based on the findings as evidence, this study argued that the media should be redefined in a microsystem. This is because in Bronfenbrenner’s definition of a microsystem (1993, 1994), the interaction between a developing child and his/her immediate settings, such as family, caregivers and school peers, is as close as the individual and the media in today’s society. This is not only because of the high prevalence of technology products, including flat-screen TVs, smartphones, and tablets,
in each household, but also because the exposures to these media have been analyzed as more than seven hours on average a day, by Rideout, Foehr, and Roberts (2010). In this study, all of the participants’ parents reported that the average daily hours of media use were in excess of two, Timothy’s case in particular, and the way Timothy and Ian could reach media is direct and easy at home.

The use of the media might lead to negative and positive influences on the development of resilience in this study. In terms of the excessive use of the media, this study is congruent with the findings of the studies that it is highly likely to have a negative impact on students’ attention to their scholastic achievement (Sharif, Wills, & Sargent, 2010; Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2010). In the preschool-age children of this study, negative impacts of media usage encompass low learning motivation in Timothy’s case (Extract 4.41), and confusion between reality and fantasy in Ian’s case (Extract 4.68 and 4.69).

On the other hand, this study further contributes to explore positive influences of the interactions between both children and the media on the development of children’s resilience. For example, the media reinforced Timothy’s drawing talent and enriched the content of his drawings. With his drawings of Transformers and Wolverine, Timothy further gained the respect of his peers (Extract 4.37 and 4.49), which is a positive influence of the use of the media. Additionally, Ian’s emergent identity might be affected by the content of the media he observed. This is because the content of some cartoons demonstrated good and bad fighting monsters and robots, which might contribute to his moral judgement of what is good or bad (Extract 4.68).

**Profound influence of distrustful education reform in Taiwan**

This study found that education reform as an indirect element influenced the development of children’s resilience through the lens of BEST (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1994). From a child’s perspective, education reform indirectly affects an individual learner; in contrast, from parents’ perspective, the reform directly influences their expectations and education choices for their children’s education, which is in line with Lin et al. (2014). The finding of Kelvin’s case in this study was evidence that the uncertainty of education reform in Taiwan led to Kelvin’s parents’ lack of confidence.
and anxiety (Extract 5.7). For this reason, they relied on the services of diverse cram schools in Taiwan where Kelvin and his older brother had spent significant amounts of time on learning academic skills since they were toddlers (Extract 5.1).

Specifically, the finding of this study extended the understanding of the subtle relationship between education reform and cram schools in Taiwan. This is because parents look to cram schools to ensure that their children can adjust to any education reform in Taiwan, which promotes the business of cram schools. As mentioned above, the existence of cram schools represented the conventional history of examination systems deeply influenced by Confucian culture and a credential society (Yang, 1995). Under this historical background and cultural context, students in Taiwan have increasingly been under examination pressure. Therefore, since 1994, the initial education reform’s main aim is to break the examination pressure and to encourage the autonomy of the curriculum design that can integrate with overarching local cultures (Lin et al., 2014). However, the implementation of education reform initially failed to achieve these goals due to a lack of proper auxiliary plans (e.g. new assessments for entrance examinations), and relevant teacher training (e.g. training for implementing new pedagogies, and inadequate preparation to undertake new curriculum) as Lin et al. (2014) concluded. For example, the examination system did not cooperate with the purpose of education reform in the first few years so that teachers in formal educational settings experienced an extreme challenge in teaching new integrated curriculum and examination-orientated curriculum in the meantime (Lin et al., 2014). This certainly led to parents’ concern of their children’s academic careers so they had to rely on examination-orientated cram schools (Lin et al., 2014). Apparently, cram schools again, can fulfill and satisfy parents’ expectations.

It was a failure that the education reform in Taiwan did not relieve students’ learning stress, and instead increased the business of cram schools. Although, since 2000, examination systems have changed considerably and now have multiple approaches, instead of only one entrance examination, a number of parents are still anxious about their children’s educational opportunities in the future, such as Kelvin’s parents. This distrust of education reform plays an influential element on Kelvin’s academic learning in cram schools, where he was taught to be competitive.
A problem of an early intervention in social welfare system

Social welfare systems providing additional educational support for children with disability who need early interventions are defined as useful resources and viewed as protective factors on the development of children’s resilience (Breitkreuz et al., 2014; Walsh, 1996). In this study however, although the purpose of an early educational intervention of the social welfare system in Taiwan is to support children with disabilities in their early years, the issue of ‘being labelled’ can be a concern when parents consider registering for this service. This was evident when the mother of Victor with Asperger’s syndrome voiced her concern that the social welfare system operating in education settings in Taiwan presented her with the dilemma of applying for the educational welfare service or using this service. She clearly indicated that her concern about the likelihood of Victor being labelled by his peers, after Victor was registered for the service, presented her with a difficult decision. As the implementation of the service is not confidential, a therapist or special education teacher comes to Victor’s preschool and provides one-to-one tutoring. Taking a child from an inclusive to individual classroom is likely to identify him to his peers as a ‘special’ child. From the perspective of children, Hale (2015, p. 1076) found that “special education represents the attachment of disability to children’s identities” and a disability label as a stigma is associated with special education. As expected, Victor’s mother initially hesitated to register for this additional education support (Extract 5.8). Consistent with the literature, the social welfare service in an early intervention in Taiwan is a protective element to support resilience of children with disabilities. However, if the majority of people in Taiwanese society still deem this minority group as a stigma, the implementation of the early intervention in any educational setting will always be a concern.

To sum up, through the lens of BEST, the findings in exploring influential elements on the development of children’s resilience were not only congruent with the earlier literature, but also extended the new understandings of some elements from the perspective of Taiwanese social and cultural contexts. Initially, at an individual level, preschoolers’ learning motivation as an influential element on evaluating children’s resilience is more important than their performance. Secondly, in a microsystem level, as expected, families are an important resource on the development of young children’s
resilience. This study provided a cultural insight into the understanding of grandparental involvement in a three-generational household. The active grandparental involvement not only comes from the Taiwanese patriarchal society that is historically influenced by the Confucius culture, but also offers the assistances of housework and childcare. With this involvement, grandparents’ parenting styles simultaneously play negative and positive influences on their grandchildren’s resilience development, which has been overlooked in the Western literature.

Another cultural influential element on children’s resilience is cram schools in Taiwanese educational context that is also embedded in the evolution of the traditional examination system in the Chinese culture. In this study, cram schools influence the preschoolers’ learning positively and negatively. While the positive influence is providing the integration service between alternative childcare for parents and children’s interests in learning extracurricular, the influence of the behaviour management used in cram schools on preschoolers’ adjustment to loss of a competition might be a concern.

Moreover, this study not only indicated that Taiwanese multiple religious traditions affected children’s resilience through their exposure to the practice of those religious traditions at home, but also argued that the way Taiwanese multiple religious traditions were displayed and practiced determines whether this influential element on children’s resilience is positive or negative. In addition, the influence of exposure to media, such as watching TV and movies, and playing games on tablets or smartphones on preschoolers’ lived experience is direct rather than an indirect influence as Bronfenbrenner’s definition of an exosystem in 1977. Lastly, at a macrosystem level, the influences of the education reform and an early educational intervention of the social welfare system in Taiwan were revealed in this study. In the next section, the discussion of the interactions between these influential elements and the five participant children shows the understanding of the complexity of these interactive relationships.

6.3.3 Complexity of interactions between influential elements on children’s resilience development

Interactions in this study are analysed by a narrative approach as methodology and BEST as a theoretical framework. The narrative approach highlights the interaction
between individual children and their social contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000); BEST emphasizes proximal processes as the forms of the interaction among individuals, environments, objects and symbols, which is the fundamental concept of BEST (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). Through the analyses of the narrative methodology and BEST, the understanding of the interactions between the research participants and the influential elements, such as their parents, grandparents, cram schools, multiple religious traditions, the media, social welfare systems, and education reform in Taiwanese social and cultural contexts, are complex.

Figure 6.3 illustrates several significant and complex interactions between the five participant children and their influential elements on the development of their resilience, which are embedded in BEST.
Figure 6.3 Complexity of interactions of influential elements embedded in BEST in Taiwanese context
Consistent with the principle of Ungar’s complexity (2004, 2011), it is argued that the influence of the interaction between individuals and their environments on the development of children’s resilience is a complex process that takes place in mesosystems, exosystems and macrosystems, rather than a single factor or a microsystem. Complexity of several interactions in this study consists of the influential relationship between preschoolers, their parents, cram schools and preschools on the development of their resilience, the subtle reciprocal relationship between cram schools, parents’ expectation and education reform in the Taiwanese educational context, the powerful interaction among individuals, their grandparental involvement and multiple religious traditions, and the process of a decision-making dilemma between a child with special needs, parents’ choices and the social welfare system in Taiwan.

The initial interaction between individuals, preschools, families and cram schools in this study indicates one of the most important influences on the development of children’s resilience. This is because although cram schools fulfil the parents’ additional childcare needs, the conflicting classroom management styles and teaching purposes between preschools and academic-orientated cram schools are a concern. This was evident in Kelvin’s case, when his learning behaviour is conditioned by a token system in a cram school where the children’s learning goal is to win a reward through a competition, whereas his preschool teachers are concerned about the consequences of his behavioural condition and disagree with the use of this particular behaviour management (Extract 4.32).

As the interaction between the cram schools and parents’ choice as abovementioned, the complex relationship between this special educational setting, parents’ expectations and education reform also impact preschoolers’ resilience development. Because cram schools are the product of the Taiwanese educational culture influenced by the profoundly Confucius values, academic-orientated cram schools can satisfy parents’ expectation for their children’s academic attainment, in particular when those parents are anxious about the uncertainty and efficacy of the education reform. The evidence indicated in the previous section the relationship between the existence of cram schools and parents showed their distrust of the education reform in Taiwan.
Moreover, the interactive relationship between an individual, his grandmother’s parenting style and multiple religious traditions impacts on the individual’s resilience development positively and negatively. This is because the way Taiwanese multiple religious traditions displayed and practiced by Ian’s grandmother’s storytelling and religious worships suggests Ian’s fear of supernatural beings and his emergent identity of the moral judgement, which is discussed in the last section. Lastly, the dilemma over the interactive process between a child with special needs, his parents and the social welfare system in Taiwan seems to impede the child’s right to have an early educational intervention. This was evident in Victor’s case when his mother had the dilemma over whether or not to invoke Victor’s right to the social welfare service versus the unavoidable labelling stigma amongst his peers at preschool that would result from using it.

This study argued that children’s resilience is not only affected by single influential elements as aforementioned, but also strongly influenced by their interactions. These examples of the interactions shown in Figure 6.3 on the development of children’s resilience occur not only in immediate environments as the main focus of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) but also in remote settings.

To sum up, the exploration of RO2 shows that through the lens of BEST the influential elements and the interactions between the five participants and their ecologies and social contexts on the development of their resilience are complex. The findings of RO2 not only extend the understanding of the construct of resilience, redefine the influential risk and portative elements embedded in the Taiwanese social context, but also contribute to an insight into the understanding of complexity of the interactions in children’s resilience development. Moreover, through the lens of BEST applied in RO2, the study also revealed some benefits and limitations of this theoretical framework, which are discussed in the next section.
6.4 Benefits and Limitations of BEST Applied in Taiwanese Contexts

This narrative study contributes to the theoretical understanding of children’s resilience. Through exploring preschoolers’ lived experiences in Taiwan, the findings of this study pointed out some benefits and limitations of the application of BEST.

6.4.1 Benefits of BEST

There are two major advantages in the application of BEST in this study. Firstly, BEST provides not only a theoretical framework but also theoretically thematic guidance in this study. The examples of diverse settings, relationships, and interactions in the ecological systems BEST has defined offer concrete criteria to review the five participants’ narratives in relation to resilience. This theoretically thematic framework integrates BEST with the concept of resilience to analyze children’s influential elements within their narratives, which can be seen in Table 5.1 and Appendix J. With this integrated instrument, the influential elements and the interactions between them on the development of children’s resilience revealed in this study can be categorized in microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem levels. The use of this instrument contributes to the theoretical understanding of the development of children’s resilience.

Secondly, the findings of this study enrich the content of BEST. As the analytical process has to repeatedly review the definition of these systems and the influential elements identified in my data, through this process, the findings indicate that some of the influential elements are congruent with BEST, such as families and parents’ expectation, teachers and preschools, and children’s learning motivation. Besides, more importantly, some from the specific Taiwanese cultural context enrich the content of Bronfenbrenner’s systems, such as grandparents’ parenting styles and extended families, cram schools, multiple religious traditions, and education reform in Taiwan. As BEST is substantially employed in Western research, this study enlarges the content of BEST from the perspective of the social and cultural context in Taiwan.
6.4.2 Limitations of BEST

While this study expands the understanding of BEST from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspective, the findings of this narrative study also revealed some limitations of BEST. Initially, BEST is too general to capture specific influential factors and interactions on the development of children’s resilience from the social and cultural perspective. Consistent with Harvey and Delfabbro’s comments (2004), although the strength of BEST is to examine a universal phenomenon and general interactions, the weakness is it is unable to deepen the understanding of the process of resilience development in specific social and cultural contexts. As mentioned, although culture is characterized by a macrosystem as a significant factor, BEST does not elaborate its overarching and abundant content. This was evident in some influential elements, such as active grandparental involvement in extended families, cram schools, and multiple religious traditions are embedded in the unique social and cultural context in Taiwan, which would not be recognized in BEST developed in a Western culture.

Moreover, this study is congruent with Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) who acknowledge that some environments or social phenomena have been drastically transformed since this ecological theory appeared in the 1970s. The findings of this study had difficulties in categorizing some influential elements into a suitable ecological system because the definitions of the systems in BEST might not fully be involved in the way the elements influence the development of children’s resilience. For instance, the development of technology and the media, as previously mentioned, has changed individuals’ lives tremendously. This study argues that the media should not be in an exosystem, but in an immediate setting as a microsystem in the 21st century. For this reason, the interaction between Timothy and the media operating as a proximal process profoundly influences his development of resilience. As seen in Figure 6.3, the red double arrow points to the relationship between an individual and the media in the context of Taiwan.

Lastly, this study argued that the importance of the interactions between individual children and their environments is incomparable. Inconsistent with Bronfenbrenner’s focus on proximal processes, as he proposes the interaction between an individual and his/her immediate surroundings is more influential on child
development than other indirect settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), this narrative study cannot distinguish the importance of the influential elements and the interactions between them. This is because a narrative study as a methodology approach does not aim to compare between those factors or interactions that are more influential than others. Conversely, the interactions between each child and their influential elements are uniquely embedded in their individual context. As a result, the understandings of children’s narrative of resilience should be grounded on their unique social and cultural contexts, and of these influential elements and the interactions between individuals and their ecologies derived from their resilience stories should be viewed individually and independently. This argument is commensurate with Ungar’s concept of resilience as a social construction (2004), which supports an emerging resilience model in this study and is discussed in the next section.

In summary, this study applied BEST as a theoretical framework to extend existing knowledge in relation to protective and risk factors and their influential elements on the development of children’s resilience. There are some advantages of using BEST, such as providing a theoretically thematic framework of RO2, and reviewing data in a systematic way. In contrast, there are some limitations that BEST might not be relevant to this study in light of the findings of RO1 and RO2, such as it is too general to capture the influential elements from specific cultural contexts and there is no updated content of the ecological systems. The most important disadvantage of BEST applied in this study is that because of narrative methodology, the exploration of the influential elements and interactions on children’s resilience is incomparable with each other, and each of the interactive relationships is equally important in each child’s context. Therefore, through the evaluation of BEST, this study conceptualizes an emerging framework of resilience research in the Taiwanese social cultural context at the end of this discussion.

6.5 An Emerging Resilience Model in Taiwanese Contexts

This study supports Ungar’s concept of resilience as a social construction, which has found “a nonsystemic, nonhierarchical relationship between risk and protective factors, describing the relationships between factors across global cultures and diverse
social and political settings as chaotic, complex, relative, and contextual” (Ungar, 2004, p. 342). With the analysis of the narrative methodology, the influential elements and the interactions of these on the development of children’s resilience found in the five preschoolers’ narratives are regarded as an independent and reciprocal relationship.

Hence, the conceptualization of this study based on the findings and discussions of RO1 and RO2, demonstrates an emerging model of resilience in Taiwanese social and cultural context as shown in Figure 6.4.

Figure 6.4 A resilience model in Taiwanese social and cultural context

Figure 6.4 is constructed in two parts. One is the influential elements surrounding an individual development of resilience, including the seven important elements discussed in this chapter and others. Others refer to the elements revealed in this study, such as parent’s colleagues and workplaces, and potential elements unrealized yet for future exploration. The second part analyses the interactions between a child and the element, and between the elements. This resilience model breaks Bronfenbrenner’s systematic boundary to construct the new understanding of the
concept of resilience, and respects all the influential elements as equally important to contribute to the development of children’s resilience.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, although RO1 and RO2 are discussed separately, with learning the five children’s narratives in relation to resilience, the influential elements and the interactions of these can be refined, and as a result conceptualize the emerging resilience model in Taiwanese social and cultural context (Figure 6.4). In light of the findings of RO1, the discussion focuses on the effectiveness of teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in order to cultivate the development of children’s resilience, and the children’s narrative identities emerging through exploring their multimodal and collaborative forms of narratives.

With regard to the discussion of RO2, the findings of the influential elements and interactions between these on the development of children’s resilience contest the conventional evaluation of resilience research. Initially, the two exceptional resilience stories of Victor and Howard challenge the way the conventional concept of resilience evaluates risk and protective elements. Moreover, through the discussion of BEST, the theoretical challenge leads to the redefinition of the influential elements from the perspective of Taiwanese social and cultural context. Most importantly, this study found that the complexity of the interactions between the elements impacts on the development of children’s resilience beyond the interpretation of Bronfenbrenner’s proximal process.

To synthesize the narrative findings and the discussion of BEST, this study conceptualizes an emerging resilience model based on Taiwanese social and cultural context. This model is able to narrow the gap in the body of knowledge in resilience literature both in early childhood and in a Taiwanese context. In the next chapter, the conclusion of the findings of this study and recommendations based on the findings and discussions will be addressed.
Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1 Overview

This study was conducted to explore preschoolers’ lived experience of resilience through engaging in the teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories in Taiwanese public preschools. In accordance of the purpose of this study, the two Research Objectives were shaped. In the previous chapter, the discussion of RO1 revealed the four major themes:

- The process of children’s resonance with teachers’ storytelling in relation to the resilience-orientated story as the premise of promoting children’s resilience
- A collaborative narrative as a resilience facilitator
- The complementary relationship between children’s resilience and emergent identities shaped by the daily interactions with some unique social and cultural elements in the Taiwanese context
- Multimodality of preschoolers’ narratives as a means of obtaining insight into their lived experience of resilience.

In terms of RO2, in light of the analysis of preschoolers’ narrative of resilience within BEST, the findings enlarge the content of BEST from the social and cultural perspective, and evaluate the limitations of BEST, which is viewed as too general to capture specific influential factors and interactions on the development of children’s resilience from the social and cultural perspective, and it fails to update the content of the ecological systems to reflect changes in societies. Apart from that, the application of the concept of a proximal process was limited in this narrative study because the significance of each influential element on an individual child’s resilience is incomparable, and because the interactions between the five participant children and their influential elements embedded in their ecologies in Taiwan are culturally and contextually unique. Therefore, with these findings and discussions, this study
contributes to the conceptualization of the emerging resilience model in Taiwanese social and cultural context, which described in Chapter 6 (Figure 6.4).

In this final chapter, the recommendations and final considerations for the practice of education professionals, such as preschool teachers, and for education policy and potential research are addressed. These recommendations are grounded on the narrative approach that revealed the findings of the five children’s narratives of resilience in Chapter 4, and that delineates the influential elements and the interactions between the individuals and their influential ecologies within BEST in Chapter 5, and are drawn from the discussion that follows of both findings in Chapter 6. The recommendations embody the outcomes of this study for preschool practice and provide an insight into future research. Therefore, prior to recommendations, a summary of the key findings and the strengths and limitations of this study are addressed. This chapter also concludes with methodological suggestions for future research in the field of development of children’s resilience in early age settings. Finally, a summary of this chapter is presented.

7.2 Strengths and Limitations

There are a number of strengths and limitations in this study. Firstly, the purposeful sampling which obtained the participant children from diverse backgrounds has enriched the understanding of resilience in a non-Western culture and marginalized groups, such as children with disabilities, children living in single-parent families, and even children in their early years. In this study, the five participant preschoolers’ narratives of resilience in Taiwanese public preschool contexts contribute an insight into the construct of resilience in the early childhood.

Despite the five preschoolers’ diverse backgrounds, this small number of participants cannot be generalized, which is a major limitation in this study as well as a methodological weakness. This is not only because the philosophical assumption of narrative research is not to generalize an individual’s lived experience derived from an individual (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), but also the dialogic/performance analysis are not effective on large numbers of research participants (Riessman, 1993, 2008). Consequently, conclusions of this study drawn from these five individual cases might
not be applicable elsewhere, even in other Taiwanese public preschools. It must be acknowledged that this study has not aimed to be a basis for generalization.

Another particular strength of this study is that the qualitative narrative methodology adopted highlights the importance of unique cultural contexts and enriches the content of BEST. Initially, multiple religious traditions as an important influential element on the development of children’s resilience are exclusive daily practices, and are historically embedded in Taiwanese society. Through Riessman’s dialogical/performance analysis method involving multiple voices and narrative multimodality interpreted by Puroila et al. (2012a), such as preschoolers’ drawings and photos relating to examples of real research contexts in this study text, affords readers with a better understanding of Taiwanese cultural contexts. Additionally, the analysis of the preschoolers’ narratives of resilience within BEST revealed that this theoretical framework exhibits a lack of the profound understanding of some influential elements embedded in a non-Western social and cultural context. Apart from multiple religious traditions, the extended family featured in this study as another key influential element on the preschoolers’ resilience development, and represents one of the typical family structures in Taiwan. Hence, through a narrative approach, the findings of these social and cultural elements extend the application of BEST, and this study contributes to the body of knowledge from the perspective of non-Western cultural context in resilience literature.

Subjectivity is an unavoidable limitation in this narrative study, but the acknowledgement of my subjectivity is the narrative researcher’s responsibility. For instance, in Howard’s resilience story, I was aware that my personal childhood experience of parental divorce might influence the result of the interpretation of Howard’s unstable emotional expressions. However, with the advantage of multivoiced narrative texts, and by reviewing my observations and interview data with Howard’s mother, this limitation has been maximally managed.

Another strength is the benefit of using resilience-orientated stories to not only assist the participant preschoolers, but also the other children and teachers. Although my data collection finished, I still maintain occasional contact with all the teachers. For example, Miss Anny responded to my email saying “The healing of these stories you
brought to us is powerful and I have never noticed that”. This is a practical benefit that this study demonstrated to the teachers.

From a practical perspective, the process of using the resilience-orientated stories as an intervention for promoting children’s resilience in this study has incurred a number of challenges. One of the primary limitations was a lack of available counterpart stories in Chinese for some of the life difficulties and challenges encountered by the preschoolers in this study. For instance, some children encountered during this study showed signs of being addicted to technology and the media, had witnessed parents’ affairs and fights, and had a fear of sickness in family members; few of which were relevantly covered, or could be sourced, in resilience-orientated stories. Hence, this limitation provides an opportunity for authors and illustrators of children’s books to keep producing diverse topics of storybooks addressing the issues facing young children living in the 21st century.

Moreover, for the teachers in the three preschools, the process of finding appropriate resilience-related stories and also telling them to the preschoolers, in an already overcrowded curriculum schedule is time-consuming. At the beginning of this study the intention was to integrate the resilience-orientated story into thematic curriculum in the respective host preschool. However, this was not possible mainly due to the overcrowded curriculum schedule. The eight preschool teachers in the three preschools all expressed difficulties achieving this because they were pressured by parents and the heads of the three affiliate elementary schools to teach basic literacy, such as learning Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. As a result, the teachers’ storytelling related to the resilience-orientated story became an independent lesson implemented once a week, as can be seen in each preschool timetable.

The last concern in this study related to language translations from Chinese and Taiwanese to English. This is not only because my research participants could not speak English, but also because the process of language translation increases the risk of losing valuable research contexts. This might lead to a misunderstanding of the context, which is likely to damage research trustworthiness. Furthermore, according to Riessman (2008), due to the possibility of inaccurate language translation, the pressure on a non-
English researcher is to confirm equivalence of meaning in texts when they publish to English journals. Therefore, Riessman (2008) urged researchers, who carry out studies in different languages and work with translated transcriptions, to recognize translation issues during the period of research, rather than to avoid or erase them.

To diminish the negative influence of trustworthiness in light of the issue of language translation, several strategies were implemented. In the section 3.5.5 Translation texts, in Chapter 3, I adopted Brislin (1970) several principles of language translation in research in order to assure trustworthiness of the translations in this study, such as the assistance from another bilingual speaker, back translation, and consultation with my supervisors. Moreover, I not only wrote research field notes, clearly showing the process of data analysis, and acknowledging the influence of the translation issue as per Riessman’s recommendation, but also applied multiple voices in Riessman’s dialogic/performance narrative analysis rather than just resorting to a researcher’s interpretive voice throughout the whole research.

### 7.3 Key Findings

This section concludes the significant findings of RO1 and RO2, and the synthesis of the discussion chapter. It also offers a base outline of further recommendations. The key findings and discussion of RO1 and RO2 are synthesized from practical, theoretical, and methodological perspectives.

From a practical perspective, the use of resilience-orientated stories in teachers’ storytelling pedagogy can effectively promote preschoolers’ resilience. To achieve the development of children’s resilience through teachers’ storytelling, the preschool teachers use different strategies in the pedagogy of storytelling to build and reinforce a connection between the stories and preschoolers’ lived experiences, such as questioning, self-disclosure, and encouraging the children’s discussion of the story. Once children’s resonance is established with the stories, their life difficulties and inner worlds can be better accessed through their own voices, and their negative emotions can be comforted by imitating the story protagonists’ solutions and positive thinking, thus facilitating the development of their resilience.
Furthermore, the exploration of influential elements and interactions between individuals and their influential ecologies showed them to be highly relevant and practical resources for promoting children’s resilience. For example, given the prevalence of extended families in Taiwanese society, this study found that grandparental involvement is a useful childcare resource. Cram schools are a unique educational product in Taiwan, which extend an alternative resource for childcare service outside preschool hours. Furthermore, even though in this study, education reform and social welfare systems in Taiwan impact the parents’ expectations for their children’s academic attainment, they also act as indirect influential elements on children’s resilience development. These elements can be considered as potential resources to facilitate children’s resilience.

From a methodological perspective of the narrative approach, two important findings are addressed. Firstly, the narrative approach empowers young children’s voices through understanding their multimodal narratives. Using diverse narrative forms to understand children’s lived experiences in relation to resilience highlights that young children are capable narrators. This is revealed by the multimodal narrative expressions, such as children’s writing and non-verbal narratives, can verify and illuminate verbal narratives in order to deepen the understanding of their lived experiences. This is especially true for children’s drawings which capture their inner worlds and expose how they construct the meaning of their identities.

Secondly, through the narrative approach, exploring children’s narrative of resilience revealed the complementary relationship between children’s resilience and emergent identities at an early age. In addition, it confirmed that their emergent identities were shaped by the daily interactions with some unique social and cultural elements in the Taiwanese context, such as the telling of folktales and religious stories, and the practice of multiple religious traditions. These influential elements and interactions on the development of children’s resilience allow a new understanding in resilience literature from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspective.

From the theoretical perspective, the use of BEST integrating with resilience literature as an analytical framework in this study provides theoretically thematic guidance not only in the general influential settings and elements, but also for
interactions between individuals and these elements in their ecologies. The findings of the influential elements in RO2 confirm that parents, preschool teachers, social welfare and education reform in Taiwan are captured in the categories of BEST and congruent with the previous literature in resilience. The unique interaction between each participant child and their ecologies demonstrates that the manifestation of the child’s resilience is individual and incomparable.

Furthermore, the findings of this study critique BEST for two reasons. Initially, the settings, environments and characteristics Bronfenbrenner defined in the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem are (in the context of a focused study that seeks to understand lived experiences of individuals) overly simple and general. The definitions and descriptions of these ecological systems are need updating to reflect the nuances of society and the reflexive interrelatedness of these systems that comprises life in the 21st century. For instance, media was identified in Bronfenbrenner’s exosystem in 1977, but evidence in this study shows it should be regarded as a microsystem. Additionally, these definitions in BEST do not consider the Taiwanese social and cultural influential elements as this study revealed, such as cram schools, active grandparental involvement in extended families, and multiple religious traditions.

Lastly, based on the findings and discussions of RO1 and RO2, and the evaluation of the application of BEST, the emerging model of resilience was contextualized from the Taiwanese social and cultural perspective in this narrative study, as showed in Figure 6.4. This model contributes to an insight into an understanding of the development of young children’s resilience in the Taiwanese, non-Western context.

On the basis of these key findings, some considerable suggestions are addressed in this study. The following recommendations are presented for professional practices, educational policies and future research, respectively.
7.4 Recommendations for Professional Practice and Education Policy in Early Childhood in Taiwan

As noted, this study was conducted in Taiwan where the three public preschools as the research contexts were embedded. The recommendations provided here are also applied in Taiwan. As this study is concerned with preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience, through engaging in teachers’ storytelling, children’s resonance with the resilience-orientated stories facilitates their resilience development. Through understanding children’s narratives, the negative influential elements as risk factors on the development of resilience can be improved, whereas the positive influences as protective factors can be maintained. Therefore, this section extends recommendations for professional practice and education policy as outlined in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1
Summary of Recommendations for Professional Practice and Education Policy in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations for Preschool Teachers and Preschools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promoting resilience-orientated stories at preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allocation of preschool curriculum time for promoting children’s resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of different teaching strategies in the pedagogy of storytelling to reinforce resonance between stories and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognition of the importance of listening to preschoolers’ voices to understand their potential risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Promoting parenting education for grandparents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promoting collaboration between preschools and cram schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations for Education Policy makers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Explicit goals for education reform to maximize a success of the reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recognition of the importance of children’s resilience development in early childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Support the priority of the development of children’s resilience in Early Childhood Education and Care Act (ECECA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.1 summarizes recommendations for professional practice and education policy in Taiwan. These recommendations, which are based on the findings and discussion of this study, for professional practice and education policy are addressed in this section.

7.4.1 Professional practice promoting children’s development of resilience

In this section, the three resources the study found to be essential and valuable for promoting the development of children’s resilience are discussed; namely, teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories, extended families, and cram schools. To ensure that these resources can be accessible and available, this study provides suggestions as below.

**Promoting resilience-orientated stories at preschool**

As demonstrated in this study, teachers’ storytelling related to the resilience-orientated stories is an effective pedagogy and intervention in order to cultivate preschoolers’ resilience. It is important for preschool teachers to recognize that the implementation of the resilience-orientated story as a pedagogy can: engage children in learning; be an intervention that promotes the development of children’s resilience; and offer some prevention by exploring children’s emotional needs and the life difficulties they have encountered, whilst also suggesting coping strategies for those challenges. Hence, there are some recommendations for preschool teachers as professional educators in terms of their curriculum arrangement, how to use storytelling as a useful pedagogy to facilitate children’s resilience, and understanding the importance of preschoolers’ resilience development.

Primarily, as evidence of the effectiveness of teachers’ storytelling in facilitating children’s resilience in this study, it is suggested that teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories should integrate with a thematic curriculum in preschool in Taiwan. This is not only because integration of resilience-orientated stories with the thematic curriculum can facilitate more efficient learning, but also because the overcrowded curriculum arrangement does not provide adequate spaces and time for
children to manifest their resilience, Victor with Asperger’s syndrome is an example of this. To achieve the aforementioned, this study recommends that overcrowded preschool curricula in Taiwan, as the participant teachers in this study have also reflected, should be improved.

Secondly, it is evident in this study that resonance between resilience-orientated stories and children’s lived experiences is an important process to enhance the effectiveness of teachers’ storytelling. This is because, once children’s resonance with the stories has been established, there is greater potential to positively influence their resilience. To reinforce this connection, teachers should take advantage of some strategies in the pedagogy of storytelling, such as questioning, self-disclosure, and encouraging children’s discussion of the story, which was also proven in Howard, Kelvin, and Ian’s cases in particular.

Lastly, when accessing the children’s inner worlds through their storytelling and stimulating children’s narratives, preschool teachers have a better understanding of children’s lived experiences, such as potential reasons of children’s emotional issues and low learning motivation, and unrecognized life difficulties they may face. Therefore, besides recognizing the power of storytelling, the importance of listening to children’s voices to understand potential risks they encounter in their lives is highlighted in this study, which is congruent with Kinnunen and Puroila (2016) and Spyrou (2011).

Promoting parenting education for grandparents

This study is in line with the concept of the microsystem where Bronfenbrenner (1993, 1994) indicated that families are one of the most influential environments as they are the closest setting to an individual child. As the findings of this study have highlighted, families are the most influential element on children’s development of resilience. In addition, they are also the best support and environmental resources to promote their children’s resilience (Masten et al., 1990; Masten et al., 2013; Ungar, 2011; Werner & Smith, 1992, 2001).
This study highlights the importance of extended families whose grandparents live together. While grandparents in Taiwan are a valuable and unique cultural resource contributing to their grandchildren’s development of resilience, the negative influence of inappropriate grandparents’ parenting styles can be a concern. The evidence of Ian’s case demonstrates that his grandmother’s frightening parenting style is one of the causes of his fear, and Timothy’s grandparents’ spoiling parenting style lets him watch violent TV programs and movies. These examples show that, despite the benefit of extended family resource in childcare and sharing housework as an important protective element to develop young children’s resilience, there are suggestions for improving inappropriate grandparents parenting styles which are as follows:

- When grandparental involvement with grandchildren in extended families is in practice, grandparents should be encouraged to participate in parenting education programs provided by preschools.

- The discussion of an appropriate and consistent parenting style between grandparents, parents and teachers should be advocated.

**Promoting collaboration between preschools and cram schools**

Cram schools are part of common learning environments in Taiwan, and one of the important influential elements on the development of children’s resilience in this study. The functions of the cram school in this study reside in not only childcare, but also in extracurricular learning and achieving success in particular academic goals. Based on the findings of this study, from parents’ perspective, cram schools are one of the family resources as they extend the hours of childcare after preschool, and the child also gets to learn during that time. However, from a preschool teachers’ perspective, the behaviour management of a token system in academic-orientated cram schools often conflicts with behaviour management styles in preschools. This conflict tends to have a negative influence on how preschoolers cope with losing, for example, Kelvin’s case; or learning effectively, more generally. Therefore, in terms of attending an academic-orientated cram school, this study suggests that it is necessary to have cooperation between preschool teachers, cram school teachers and parents in order to encourage consistency with their management of children’s learning and behaviours.
7.4.2 Education policy promoting children’s development of resilience

As clearly noted, evidence in this study shows that uncertain education reform in Taiwan has raised parents’ concerns. Parents have to rely on academic-orientated cram schools to fulfil their expectations for their children’s academic achievement. The difference of the teaching goal between preschools and the cram school has led to a negative influence on the development of preschoolers’ resilience. In addition, teachers’ reflection of an overcrowded curriculum on ECECA in Taiwan is discussed in the previous chapter. Hence, there are suggestions for education policy makers to consider.

Initially, evidence of this study indicates that the inconsistent education policy over the past 15 years has led to great concern for parents. This study deepens the understanding of how this uncertain education reform impacts on the parents’ confidence in deciding their children’s education. The influence of this concern indirectly transfers to pressure on young children as they have to learn more and more extracurricular, and spend excessive time in cram schools in order to be able to compete with others. This study shows that education reform in Taiwan indirectly caused a negative effect on children’s resilience. Therefore, this study recommends that policy makers identify an explicit goal for education reform and establish proper auxiliary plans in order to maximize the success of such a reform. This is consistent with the opinion of Lin et al. (2014).

Additionally, from the perspective of the literature in resilience in Taiwan, what appears to be lacking in current policy is an adequate understanding of the importance of resilience. According to the ECECA in Taiwan, one of the main purposes of preschool education is to ensure the physical and mental health of children (Ministry of Education, 2013). As noted, to ensure children’s psychological development and mental health, resilience is a significant capacity to develop and learn (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006; Henderson, 2007). Consistent with the literature, when exploring children’s lived experiences of the influential elements and interactions on their resilience through teachers’ storytelling related to resilience-orientated stories, this study draws attention to the importance of the development of children’s resilience. With little concern of young children’s resilience and less guidance to achieve the purpose of ECECA, our early education policy makers should reflect on the fundamental development that should be
primarily established in early age, and ensure that related early childhood education and care providers, such as preschools, childcare centres and some cram schools, understand the importance of children’s resilience and mental well-being.

Lastly, as noticed, it is a concern the overcrowded and academic-orientated preschool curriculum that prioritizes achievement in basic literacy and numeracy over social and emotional development and well-being. The teachers participating in this study are all aware of their curriculum pressure and difficulties in dealing with children’s emotional problems or mental stress. As discussed previously, this might be because there is insufficient attention on balancing both the development of children’s resilience and cognitive-orientated learning in ECECA. To relieve preschoolers’ learning burden and allow them to focus on their resilience and well-being, the findings of this study support prioritising the development of children’s resilience as an element of government educational policy going forward.

7.5 Potential for Future Research

There are several potentials for future domestic and international studies to continue work on promoting children’s resilience. From the domestic point of view, as noted in Chapter 2, a review of the publications and unpublished doctoral theses in children’s well-being revealed that there has been very little resilience research or new studies in the category of well-being. Resilience in Taiwan, to date has been translated into different terms so that the understood definition of resilience is still diverse. Furthermore, Ungar (2008) argues that there has been some cultural hegemony as Western-based studies have dominated resilience research. He notes that to deepen understandings of the concept of resilience researchers should not overlook non-Western countries and marginalized groups. Therefore, although resilience research in has been substantial, this study has made significant contribution in two ways. It provides a rich study based in a non-Western cultural context, which further enlarges understandings of preschoolers’ lived experiences of resilience; and it elaborates current framings of BEST in terms of the influential elements and the interactions of which emerged. As a result, my recommendations to future researchers in the Taiwanese context are:
• Integrating the diverse terms associated with resilience into a unified terminology agreed by common consensus and developing a cultural-appropriate definition of resilience is an urgent priority.

• Even though researchers adopt quantitative instruments of resilience, the influential cultural factors should not be overlooked in discussion.

• The limitation of this study was the small group of participants despite its diversity. Initiate further investigation of resilience in marginalized and non-marginalized groups in order to develop a more complete understanding of the development of human’s resilience from various age groups and environments.

• Prioritize further studies into the methods and consequences of the use of resilience-orientated stories at preschools, and develop related effective age-appropriate interventions and prevention programs to promote resilience demands.

• Examine and evaluate the conceptualization of the emerging resilience model developed in the Taiwanese social and cultural context in this study by utilizing more empirical research.

From an international research point of view, Western researchers could take greater account of more cross-cultural studies in order to integrate the concept of resilience and develop an effective prevention and intervention. In the line with Ungar (2011), through a cultural lens, interpretations of resilience in local contexts contribute to the body of knowledge in resilience research. As a result, researchers should cooperate internationally, and therefore diverse dialogues from different cultural contexts can learn the effectiveness of promoting children’s resilience.

In terms of resilience studies in early childhood in the literature review chapter, there is a lack of internationally and domestically systematic investigations in this age group. As Masten and Gewirtz (2006) and Masten et al. (2013) advocate that young children are frequently viewed as being particularly vulnerable to adversities, promoting resilience in the early years is fundamental. Hence, future research should pay more
attention to preschool children’s voices and enhance their resilience, because the more support they receive in early childhood, the less problems they may encounter in future development.

From the perspective of methodology, one of the major strengths of this study highlights the understanding of young children’s resilience through a qualitative narrative approach, whereas it cannot be conducted in large populations and generalized to other groups. In terms of further research relating to different ages of people’s resilience, final suggestions are:

- Longitudinal studies in resilience in Taiwan are urgently needed. This is not only because longitudinal research can examine the change of an individual’s resilience in various developmental stages, but also explore the influential factors appearing in these stages, and the connections between these factors. Hence, researchers and educators can develop a better prevention and intervention plan to promote resilience.

- Through a narrative approach, this study revealed the use of multimodal narratives can deepen the understanding of children’s lived experiences. However, children’s narrative expressions are more diverse than were analysed in this study, in particular the children at preschool do a lot of art work. Therefore, improving research methods for acquisition of age-appropriate data collection for young children is important.

### 7.6 Summary

In this study, I have explored the five preschoolers’ lived experiences in terms of their influential elements and interactions on the development of their resilience, and through their engagement with teachers’ resilience-orientated stories as an effective intervention, the manifestation of their resilience was presented in their individual resilience stories. This study not only makes a substantial contribution to the resilience literature gap in Taiwan and in studies of children in their early years, but also facilitates a new understanding of the construct of resilience in marginalized groups, and extends an insight into the application of BEST.
Through the summary of the key findings of this study, this conclusion chapter evaluated the strengths and limitations of this study, as well as providing a number of recommendations for professional practice, education policy, and future research. As there is importance over the development of resilience in different ages, although this study highlights young children’s voices, it is just the beginning for resilience studies in Taiwan. Taiwan still has a long journey ahead of it to catch up with Western countries in terms of resilience studies.
Afterword

This study started with the sorrowful memories of my early years as a result of my parents’ divorce, and struggling against the negative impact of being a child growing up in a single-parent family. The turning point of my childhood was having the accessible educational resources to succeed in academic learning, and eventually become a preschool teacher and researcher. Through this study, I have numerously reviewed and introspected the trajectory of my life. This exploration of the meaning of my childhood adversity has not only benefited my preschool teaching but also constructed a new meaning of my life.

That is, after a 25-year separation from my biological mother, my reconciliation with her. This is one of the most significant reasons that have brought new meaning to the creation of this study. Although this study draws to its conclusion here, I believe that my understanding of who I am, in the context of the development of my own resilience, and the pursuit of the construction of the meaning in my life, will never end.
References


Meyer, K. M. (2008). *Becoming more resilient: Perceptions of resiliency development education in post-secondary students*. (Dissertation/Thesis), ProQuest, UMI Dissertations Publishing. Retrieved from [http://griffith.summon.serialssolutions.com/2.0.0/link/0/eLvHCXMwY2BQSLUwN08zMElhLMkwzTQ3TITyswAKJRkmGRulGKamGKMMWyzCV5m5CDEypealMcm6ulc4eurCiMT4JJyfe0BSYGyzMLID9FTEG3kTQ6u-](http://griffith.summon.serialssolutions.com/2.0.0/link/0/eLvHCXMwY2BQSLUwN08zMElhLMkwzTQ3TITyswAKJRkmGRulGKamGKMMWyzCV5m5CDEypealMcm6ulc4eurCiMT4JJyfe0BSYGyzMLID9FTEG3kTQ6u-)


Appendices
## Appendix A. Resilience studies in Taiwanese contexts in English

### Table A Resilience Studies Investigated in Taiwan and Published in International Journals in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Li, M. H.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Relationships among stress coping, secure attachment, and the trait of resilience among Taiwanese college students</td>
<td>Quantitative research - survey</td>
<td>350 college students age 18-22</td>
<td>Resilience was significantly predictive of active coping in high, general, and low stress situations.</td>
<td>Resilience, Taiwanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan, E. L., &amp; Yi, C. C.</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Constructing educational resilience: The developmental trajectory of vulnerable Taiwanese youth</td>
<td>Qualitative research</td>
<td>5 graduated college students</td>
<td>Parents’ support and care, parents’ high educational expectation and educational strategies all helped participant in the process of their educational resilience despite the facing family financial hardship</td>
<td>Resilience, Taiwanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li, M. H., Eschenauer, R., &amp; Yang, Y.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Influence of efficacy and resilience on problem solving in the United States, Taiwan, and China</td>
<td>Quantitative research - survey</td>
<td>A total of 522 college students in the U.S.A, Taiwan, and China</td>
<td>There was no significant difference between the U.S., Taiwanese, and Chinese college students applying the problem-solving coping style. Only self-efficacy was predictive of problem solving coping style in the U.S. sample, whereas trait resilience was the one in Chinese counterparts. The effective predictors of problem solving in Taiwanese sample were both self-efficacy and trait resilience. Self-efficacy directly affected problem solving in the U.S. and Taiwanese samples rather than Chinese one. However, that self-efficacy indirectly impacted problem solving via trait resilience occurred in Taiwanese and Chinese samples instead of the U.S. sample.</td>
<td>Resilience, Taiwanese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The keywords I used to search these articles.*
## Appendix B. Resilience studies in Taiwanese contexts in Chinese

### Table B Resilience Studies Published in Chinese in Taiwan from 1990 to 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yang, H. P.</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Children's impulsivity, ego-resilience, family factors, and delinquent behaviour</td>
<td>Quantitative research - correlation research</td>
<td>1273 primary students at grade 5 and 6</td>
<td>More boys than girls had more delinquent behaviours&lt;br&gt;The significance of the correlation was parenting and children's delinquent behaviour&lt;br&gt;Impulsive children had more problem behaviours, while resilient children had less.</td>
<td>Impulsivity&lt;br&gt;Ego-Resilience&lt;br&gt;Family factor&lt;br&gt;Parenting style&lt;br&gt;Delinquent behaviour&lt;br&gt;Taiwan schoolchildren grade 5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseng, W. C.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>A meta-analysis of effect generalizations of protective factors of resilience</td>
<td>Quantitative research - meta-analysis method</td>
<td>21 previous studies</td>
<td>The effect size of 14 protective factors was adequate.&lt;br&gt;Both family and external connection presented the significant effect size of the protective factors</td>
<td>Resilience&lt;br&gt;risk factor&lt;br&gt;Protective factor&lt;br&gt;Positive adaptation meta-analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang, Z. Q., &amp; Xiao, W.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Life stress, depressive experience and resilience of junior high school students</td>
<td>Quantitative research - survey</td>
<td>1278 junior high school students but 1202 valid questionnaires were shown</td>
<td>The major life stress for aged 13-15 adolescents were career development and time management&lt;br&gt;The experience of depression showed low self-confidence and self-esteem&lt;br&gt;Social support was the main protective factor for them to develop resilience&lt;br&gt;There was a positive correlation between life stress and depression, while a negative correlation was shown in these two and resilience</td>
<td>Life stress&lt;br&gt;Junior high school student&lt;br&gt;Resilience&lt;br&gt;Depressive experience</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table B Resilience Studies Published in Chinese in Taiwan from 1990 to 2016 (Cont.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Chen, Y. L. Development of resilience in students from poverty: Taking President-Award winners as examples</td>
<td>Qualitative research</td>
<td>Nine participants at the age of 14, 17 and 19.</td>
<td>Poverty was not only risk factor for these children but it also led to other risk factors, which significantly influenced their lives. The negative attitudes and behaviours can be transformed by three major protective aspects. A. individual attitudes and achievement motivation towards resilience; B. Family protective factors; C. Community protective factors almost came from relatives, neighbours, teachers, friends and a social welfare system.</td>
<td>Poverty, Resilience, Early childhood education, Early intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>He, Y. S., &amp; Huang, Y. W. 6th-grade students' stressful life events, coping methods and resilience - An example of an elementary school in Taipei County</td>
<td>Quantitative research - survey</td>
<td>128 sixth-grade students</td>
<td>The three biggest stress life events for these primary schoolchildren are: fail exams, too much homework and lose family members. The three best ways to release stress were to listen to music, to study harder and go outside. The effective protectors of resilience were problem-solving and coping strategies, meaningful values, and empathy.</td>
<td>6th-grade students, Resilience, Coping strategy, Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Zhan, Y. Z., Ye, Y. Z., Peng, Y. Y., &amp; Ye, B. L. The development of the &quot;inventory of adolescent resilience&quot;</td>
<td>Quantitative research - survey</td>
<td>904 students from grade 7 to 9</td>
<td>The Inventory of Adolescent Resilience was reliable and valid. There was a significant difference between female and male in terms of the factor of empathy and interpersonal interaction; however, different grade levels were not shown any difference.</td>
<td>Adolescent, Gender, Grade, Resilience, Structural equation modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Keywords</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shen, Q. T.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The resilience of young adults experiencing inter-parental marital violence and child maltreatment</td>
<td>Qualitative research and semi-structure interview</td>
<td>6 participants at the age of 22 and 27</td>
<td>Positive self-concept and positive thinking, self-awareness, significant others support, individual determination and effort, and being independent to leave violent homes were all protective factors.</td>
<td>Child abuse, Marital violence, Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang, C. F., Lu, T. H., &amp; Wu, Y. Y.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Evaluating the measurement invariance of the scale of resilience for primary school students</td>
<td>Quantitative research</td>
<td>980 primary students from grade 3 to 6</td>
<td>The reliability and validity of instrument were adequate. There was adequate measurement invariance in the instrument.</td>
<td>Resilience, Measurement invariance, Elementary school students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuo, F. J., Tan, Z. W., &amp; Dong, X. Y.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The interaction effect of ego-control and ego-resilience on different types of adolescent delinquency</td>
<td>Quantitative research</td>
<td>822 students from grade 7 to 9</td>
<td>There was an interaction effect between independent variables (ego-control and ego-resilience) and dependent variable (juvenile delinquency). Ego-control and ego-resilience were significant influenced extroverted behaviour problems and academic adaptation. Ego-resilience were significant influenced introverted behaviour problems.</td>
<td>Ego-control, Ego-resilience, Delinquency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The keywords were adopted by these above authors in each article.
Appendix C. Research information sheet in English and Chinese

Appendix C.1: Research information sheet in English

Exploring Children’s Experience of Resilience through Teachers’ Storytelling in Taiwanese Preschools

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Research team and contact details
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Susie.Garvis@monash.edu

Research description and focus

This qualitative research aims to explore the experience of children who engage with teachers’ storytelling related to resilience in the two Taiwanese public preschools. Therefore, the main research question to answer is how children manifest their resilience through their narratives and teachers’ storytelling.

No one can live without experiencing a few risk factors in their surroundings, such as family disharmony, living in poverty or minority groups; however, children are more vulnerable than adults. Young children might not be able to deal with these risks in their lives. Through the teachers’ storytelling in relation to resilience-orientated stories, children can not only learn from the protagonist in the story, but also release and comfort their emotions.

My main data collection includes observation and informal interviews. Children’s assessments, and portfolios and performance are subordinate data in order to complement inadequate interview data. This research study will heavily rely on interviewing children to gain their narratives of resilience in preschool. Interviewing teachers in two different preschools will provide the teachers’ observation in terms of children’s narratives of resilience. If it is possible, I will also have interviews with the children’s parents regarding their children’s resilience. I used ‘informal’ interviews for the children not only because I do not want to deprive them of their learning and play time during class, but also because my role is to be a part of the children’s learning activities. Another collecting method is observations which can provide sources of children’s behaviours in learning and demonstrating resilience. The instruments used to help my observations are video recordings and descriptive field notes. Video recordings will be used for capturing the behaviours and narratives of resilience more entirely than my field notes. Collecting young children’s study documents is also part of the data collection to enrich the children’s narratives.

There are three steps to identifying research participants. The initial step is to obtain the consent of the children and their parents from two preschools. The issue of research confidentiality will be handed to the teachers and parents before they sign the research consent paper. The next step will be to screen children as I observe them in the first two weeks. Then I will interview the teachers in both Taiwanese public preschools. By interviewing the teachers, I will be able to discuss my potential participants with the teachers in order to gain a better understanding of the children and their internal and environmental risk factors. Eventually, 4-6 participants will be identified.

This study aims to benefit all children in preschools. For those who are suffering from at-risk lives can learn how to cope with their difficult situations. For others who are coping well, they can learn to be proactive in the future. Resilience is very important and should be taught at an early age.
Appendix C.2: Research information sheet in Chinese

研究計畫書
研究題目：探索幼兒參與數位娛樂故事的經驗敘述：以台灣公立幼兒園為例

研究者：林佳音 博士候選人

研究啟動單位：Griffith University, Australia 澳洲

研究對象：4-6歲報讀公立幼兒園之幼兒（24名）

研究場域：公立幼兒園教室故事時間、角落時間（圖書角與屋頂為主）

研究期間：一個學期（2014/09-2015/01）

研究時間：一週四次

研究方式：
1. 預備教育研究問卷（附件一）
2. 研究計畫書錄音記錄與檔案於幼兒生活水寫（附件二）
3. 研究者透過觀察幼兒的活動（亦正式訪談：不懂幼兒從事相關活動，或因家中幼兒健康異常為主）
4. 研究者提供圖書會讀故事的幼兒全班活動，其読記獲
5. 研究者參與幼兒及相關的單位：（閱讀向統統讀繪書之幼
6. 幼兒作業的拍攝

附件一

研究的相關資料與查詢

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術學院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教

研究者在台灣國立大學藝術学院藝術學士學位學位，且擔任幼兒園教
Appendix D. Parents consent form in English and Chinese

Appendix D.1: Parents consent form in English

Exploring Children’s Experience of Resilience through Teachers’ Storytelling in Taiwanese Preschools

PARENTS CONSENT FORM

Research team and contact details
Professor Donna Pendergast
Dean and Head of the School of Education and Professional Studies
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mia.obrien@griffith.edu.au

Dr. Susanne Garvis
Faculty of Education
Monash University
(03) 9904 7308
Susie.Garvis@monash.edu

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular have noted that:

- I understand that my child’s involvement in this research will include the three areas – the reading centre, role-play centre and the group discussion area;
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved;
- I understand that there will be no direct benefit to my child from his/her participation in this study;
- I understand that my child’s participation in this research is voluntary;
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the researcher directly;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- I agree to participate in the project.

As a custodian, I □ allow □ not allow my child participating in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name</th>
<th>Your child’s Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Signature

Date
### Appendix D.1: Teachers and parents consent from in Chinese

#### Teachers' and Parents' Consent Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Zhang</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:teacher1@school.edu">teacher1@school.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wang</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:principal@school.edu">principal@school.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Li</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:counselor@school.edu">counselor@school.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Parents' Consent Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Smith</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:john.smith@parent.com">john.smith@parent.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jane.doe@parent.com">jane.doe@parent.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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---

### Research Ethical Approval

The research was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Education.

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### References

### Appendix E. Schedule of data collection and resilience-orientated stories applied in the three preschools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Urban Preschool</th>
<th>Story Topics</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Countryside Preschool</th>
<th>Story Topics</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Coast Preschool</th>
<th>Story Topics</th>
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<td>2014/10/09</td>
<td>The kissing hand</td>
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<td>(穿過隧道)</td>
<td>(9:30 am – 4 pm)</td>
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<td>Friendship</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2014/11/04</td>
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<td>2014/11/10</td>
<td>Wenn Anna Angst hat</td>
<td>Fear &amp; Problem solving</td>
</tr>
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<td>2014/11/05</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td></td>
<td>2014/11/12</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Niemand mag mich</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8:30 am – 1 pm)</td>
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<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>2014/11/13</td>
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<td>2014/11/21</td>
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<td>(2:30 pm – 4 pm)</td>
<td>(誰是第一名*)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(9:30 am – 4 pm)</td>
<td>(謝謝你)</td>
<td>Friendship &amp; Problem solving</td>
</tr>
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<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>2014/11/14</td>
<td>Who is number one</td>
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<td>2014/11/24</td>
<td>I am special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8:30 am – 4 pm)</td>
<td>(一定要誰讓誰嗎)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(8 am – 4 pm)</td>
<td>(誰是第一名*)</td>
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<td>(2:30 pm – 4:30 pm)</td>
<td>(我是特別的*)</td>
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<td>(謝謝你)</td>
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307 | Page
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<th>Story Topics</th>
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<td>C’est ta faute! (都是你的錯)</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
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<td>I’ve become a fire-breathing dragon! (我變成一隻噴火龍了)</td>
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<td>Signal family</td>
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<td>Papa Oso (爸爸失業了)</td>
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<td>Countryside Preschool</td>
<td>Story Topics</td>
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<td>Coast Preschool</td>
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</table>
Appendix F. Teachers’ semi-structure interview questions

Appendix F.1. Teachers’ semi-structure interview questions (I)

1. According to my whole-month observations, I initially chose a few potential participants. How do you think of these children from your perspectives?

2. In accordance with these children’s developmental issues, I selected some related stories. How do you think of these stories?

3. What are the teacher’s opinions regarding the discussion questions after storytelling?

4. Is any impact of the storytelling lesson on your whole curriculum?

5. From teacher’s observations, what is the possible influence of storytelling on children?
Appendix F.2. Teachers’ semi-structure interview questions (II)

OO 國小附設幼兒園
第二次教師問卷調查
Teacher's semi-structured interview questions (II)

1. 您覺得研究者所選之圖畫書（例如：獾的禮物、想念奶奶、野狼盒、魔奇魔奇樹、不不不！不是那樣，是這樣、我不敢說，我怕被罵、誰是第一名、一定要誰讓誰嗎、晴子的黃色爸爸、都是你的錯、生氣、好消息、壞消息、我輸了、我贏了、媽媽和我，有時也有爸爸，我有兩個家）對幼兒的影響？
   What do you think of the selection of the resilience-orientated stories?

2. 研究者所選之圖畫書對教師的影響？
   What do these stories influence you in your teaching and your belief?

3. 您在說這些故事時，您印象最深刻的幼兒反應或是回應為何？
   When were you telling these stories, what kind of children's response and interaction with children did make you feel impressed? Could you please give me some examples? Why?

4. 對於研究這所選擇的圖畫書，老師有什麼想法與建議？
   What is your suggestion and comment in terms of the selection of the resilience-orientated stories?
Appendix G. Parents’ semi-structure interview questions

OO 國小附設幼兒園
幼兒生活習慣之開放問卷調查
Child's-lived-experiences interview questions

幼兒姓名(Name of Child)：

1. 請簡述幼兒個性(例如：內向害羞、外向活潑、積極開朗、溫和…等等)
   Please tell me your child’s personality and characteristics?

2. 幼兒每天接觸電視、電腦等3C產品的時間約：____小時
   How long does the child watch TV, play computer games and use technological products, such as smartphones, tablets or others?

3. 幼兒晚上就寢時間大約為：____點
   What time does the child go to bed?

4. 幼兒如廁規律與否(請打O)？
   Does the child defecate regularly?

5. 請描述幼兒的興趣與喜好
   Please describe your child’s interests and preferences.

6. 請敘述您的教養態度與您關心幼兒發展上的問題
   Please describe your parenting style and your concern about child development.

謝謝您的答覆！
Appendix H. Preschoolers’ Worksheets

Appendix H.1 An example of parent-child reading worksheets
Appendix H.2 An worksheet of Resilience-orientated story

Child’s number

Date

Summary of story

Parents’ Guidance of doing a worksheet

Child’s drawing after reading. This worksheet asks a child to draw a solution for releasing his anger

Child’s name

Co-reader’s signature

Appendix H.2 An worksheet of Resilience-orientated story

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Child’s number</th>
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<th>Summary of story</th>
<th>Parents’ Guidance of doing a worksheet</th>
<th>Child’s drawing after reading. This worksheet asks a child to draw a solution for releasing his anger</th>
<th>Child’s name</th>
<th>Co-reader’s signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

親愛的爸爸媽媽：

您的寶貝今天在學校聽了一個故事：生氣。故事中的小男孩常常跟班裡的同學、家裡的爸爸和媽媽哭鬧，老師和同學都怕他。於是，小男孩決定跟別班的孩子玩，他希望不會有人再惹他哭。

可是，過了不久，他就發現，這樣的日子太寂寥，無聊了，他開始想，為什麼大家都對他生氣？他想到其實自己也會因一些事情而生其他人的氣。更重要的是，生氣時心情還是會不好喔！於是，小男孩開始尋找消消氣的方法，例如：聽音樂、看書、玩玩具……等等。

生氣是早期情緒發展中最早出現的，也是很重要的情緒反應，但是，生氣也是一種負面的情緒反應。生氣的情緒通常無法立即解決問題，很容易影響孩子人際關係的建立。因此有人喜歡跟常常生氣的人做朋友，所以藉由這個故事讓孩子思考情緒的管理。請爸爸媽媽陪孩子一起想一想，生氣的時候可以怎麼辦？

小朋友畫下什麼方法可以讓自己消消氣？

家長簽章：_________________
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<th>Raw data</th>
<th>Initial coding (risk &amp; protective factors, )</th>
<th>Process coding (ongoing actions, interactions, emotions)</th>
<th>Narrative coding (experiences, contexts, BB theory, narratives)</th>
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<tr>
<td>C20141015 畫我擔心的事</td>
<td>CC4 (William):「老師這支筆是誰的(與 CC4 的對話，全程都是台語)？」</td>
<td>Preschool C</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Risk factor: 1. language barrier between Taiwanese and Mandarin</td>
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<td>I:「你講啥 CC4：這支筆是誰的？」I 问 CC4:「你畫什麼？你煩惱什麼？」</td>
<td>Willian CC4</td>
<td>CC4’s worries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC4:「媽媽不見。」I:「CC2 (Ian)，我等一下去拍你。」CC4:「啊你畫什麼？」CC4 指著畫：「這哩？是人阿！」I:「你煩惱一個人嗎？你煩惱誰？」CC4 你畫得這是什麼？」CC4:「這一個喔？人啊。」I 來指 CC4，並指著他的畫問：「這是人這也是人喔？(CC4 畫兩個)」NPC1:「我畫我姊姊。」I:「你煩惱姐姐喔？你為什麼要畫姊姊？」NPC 回答得太小聲。I:「你說什麼？姐姐每次都怎樣？」NPC1 說：「(我怕姐姐)生氣，所以我幫姊畫笑臉。」I 點點頭：「嗯！所以姊姊姐姐生氣對不對？(NPC1 點頭)所以你幫她畫笑臉。」CC4 聽完 NPC 的分享，他馬上跟我說：「我畫我哥哥，我很擔心他不跟我玩。」I 再次確認 CC4:「你擔心他怎樣？擔心他不跟你玩嗎？」</td>
<td>CC4 specked Taiwanese only</td>
<td>CC4 seeking my attention by talking his drawing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>「你煩惱你姐姐不跟你玩？」</td>
<td>CC4 worries: can’t find his mom</td>
<td>This causes CC4’s anger – siblings don’t play with him</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CC4 點頭又指著他自己的圖說：「啊這個是我姊姊(手指著畫)。」I 問 CC4:「你畫我姊姊不跟你玩嗎？」CC4 又點點頭。I 把鏡頭轉向 NPC1:「你畫得這是什麼？」NPC1:「這個是姐姐，這個是我。」I 问 NPC1 說：「喔！姊姊姐姐不跟你玩，那擔心媽媽什麼？」NPC1:「我擔心媽媽會哭哭，我擔心媽媽會找不到我。」I 查證式地問：「你擔心媽媽會哭哭，會找不到妳嗎？」NPC1 點點頭繼續並指著另一個他畫得人像說：「這個是爸爸。」I:「喔！那個爸爸呢？」NPC1:「爸爸不會擔心啊！爸爸從小時候長很高很高(手比動作)。」I 问 NPC1 說：「因爲爸爸長得很高的，所以沒有擔心的事情，是嗎？」NPC1 點點頭。I 回頭問 CC4:「啊你在那裡做什麼(CC4 畫他自己在圖中)？」CC4:「生氣啊！因爲哥哥和姊姊都不跟我玩。」I 重複地說：「對喔！你煩惱他們都不跟你玩喔？」CC4:「對啊！」I:「喔！這樣要怎麼辦？」CC4:「就沒辦法啊。」I 建議地說：「那你就自己玩對不對？是不是？」CC4:「我會塗顏色。」I:「好，你塗顏色。」I 鏡頭轉向 CC2 (Ian):「我要來拍你喔，CC2 你畫得這是什麼？(國語)」CC2 回答我說：「我就在樓下吃飯，然後我吃飽了，我想要去樓上，樓上黑黑的，我不敢去。」I 轉過地說：「所以 CC2 害怕黑黑的地方是不是？」CC2 點點頭並說：「對！」I 繼續問：「那為什麼你害怕黑黑的地方？」CC2 (Ian):「因為我會怕有魔鬼。」I 點點頭說：「喔對！你早上有說對不對？好，謝謝你的分享！」</td>
<td>Ian CC2</td>
<td>Risk factor: 2. Fear of darkness</td>
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<td>CC2 worries: go to dark place as it has ghosts</td>
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<td>CC2’s fear experience of darkness</td>
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<td>Ghosts/ belief/ religion</td>
<td>CC2: full narrative</td>
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<td>CC2: home context</td>
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Appendix I. An Example of Coding Table
Appendix J. An example of thematically analytical table based on BEST

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<td>• High learning motivation</td>
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<td>• Average intelligence</td>
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<td>Parents</td>
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<td>• Parental divorce</td>
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<td>• No communication about their divorce to Howard</td>
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<td>• Connectedness with mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Financial stability</td>
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<td>• Maternal grandparents as alternative caregivers and support after divorce</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Microsystem</td>
<td>Preschool (peers, teachers, curriculum)</td>
<td>• High attendance rate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hard to find</td>
<td>• Connectedness with peers and teachers</td>
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<td>• Positive learning atmosphere</td>
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<td>• Comfort Howard’s emotion by storytelling and reading storybooks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mesosystem</td>
<td>Teachers-Mother</td>
<td>• Play the piano as an extra skill to show to his peers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hard to find</td>
<td>• Effective mother-teacher communication about Howard’s preschool performance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exosystem</td>
<td>Mother’s workplace-Grandparents-Preschool</td>
<td>• Supportive network for Howard’s care so his mother can work consistently</td>
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<td>Hard to find</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Macrosystem</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>• He likes to go to a church with his mother</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hard to find</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Micro-time</td>
<td>Storytelling-Resilience</td>
<td>• Progressing development in supporting his emotional needs due to parental divorce by storytelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K. English native speakers’ comments in translated texts

Reviewers’ Comments:

1. I could almost picture what you wrote the context of Howard’s classroom in Urban Preschool in Taiwan. It is a good idea to show a few photos in Howard’s story because they help the understanding of Howard’s reading and your interpretation became easier and clearer.

2. The past and present tenses sometime are confusion. I suggest making it consistent.

3. Some grammar mistakes as I pointed out in the document.

4. A definition is important. For example, Howard went to a cram school after school. It seems to me that a cram school is a new term. Does the school provide extra-curricular, such as sports, arts, or music?

5. In Extracts, you used parentheses to provide extra context, which is a good idea. Although when I read first time, I felt they are extra, and redundant. However, when I tried to ignore them, I found that the information of the conversation or observation contexts was inadequate to fully understand what you wanted to express.
Appendix L. Urban Preschool teaching web – “Line”

- Recognizing various lines in our daily life, such as light, shapes, and clothes
- Understanding different materials
- Learning how to organize a performance

- Classroom decoration
- Weaving handcraft
- Line drawings

- Learning how to express emotions appropriately
- Discussing different emotions in different situations, such as when I feel angry or happy, what things make me happy or annoy me, and how I can deal with negative feelings, how to comfort your friend who is upset, etc.

- Learning how to interact with peers
- Discussing how to deal with peer conflict
- Role-playing of peer conflict resolution

A theme of the curriculum
Six learning domains
Potential learning content or activities
## Appendix M. Summary of resilience-orientated stories told in Urban Preschool

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Name of Story</th>
<th>Author/Translator</th>
<th>Outline of Story</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Badger's Parting Gifts</td>
<td>Susan Varley</td>
<td>One day, an old badger realized that he might die soon, so he started saying goodbye to his friends and wrote the last letter before he left. As the badger was such a kind and reliable person to his friends, when his friends found out the badger had passed away, they were all crying and upset for a long time. Winter came and went, but all of his animal friends still remember the badger so every time when they have a party they can’t stop talking about him. Therefore, these friends began to share their personal experiences with the badger to each other. For instance, a marmot shared what he learnt about paper cutting from the badger who patiently demonstrated many times to the marmot. A frog told everyone that the badger taught him how to skate, whereas a fox mentioned that the badger taught him how to tie a tie. These friends now use what they learnt from the badger to help each other. These are best gifts the badger left to them.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow Papa</td>
<td>王淑慧</td>
<td>A girl had a yellow father who was no longer existed in the girl’s life but only in her memory. The girl’s father passed away when she was very little. As her father left a yellow umbrella, family photos, and warm yellow shadow, the girl still can feel her yellow father is always with her wherever she goes. Even though the girl has a stepfather, she still believe her yellow father would never be absent from her life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional issues</td>
<td>When someone is afraid</td>
<td>Valeri Gorbachev</td>
<td>This story uses different animals as examples to show how they express their fear. For example, when a giraffe feels afraid, he will run away as fast as he can; when a fish feels afraid, he will swim very fast to avoid the danger; when a turtle feels afraid, he retracts into his shell; when a squirrel feels afraid, he jumps up a tree. There are so many animals who have their strategies to deal with their fear. The story ends up with a question, “What do you do when you feel afraid?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>La boîte à loup</td>
<td>Bloch-Henry, Anouk</td>
<td>This story flashbacks as it describes a miserable wolf sitting in a tiny dark room in the beginning and explains the reason that the wolf is in the small cage. The boy started the story by saying that “because you (the wolf) tried to scare me every time when I went to sleep. I told my daddy what you did to me so he would sit beside me to protect me. However, when my dad fall sleep, you appeared again to scare me. So, I screamed because of you. My daddy was very angry at you. Yesterday morning, my daddy and I built this cage for you because we were going to trap you in this cage, called ‘the wolf cage’. I put all the stuff related to you into the cage and used a super lock to lock you inside. Then, my dad and I carried this cage to our basement, and we hid the cage somewhere. I would never tell you where I hid...”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Story Themes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Name of Story</strong></th>
<th><strong>Author/Translator</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outline of Story</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mochi mochi no ki</strong> (Mochi Mochi tree) 魔奇魔奇樹</td>
<td><strong>Ryusuke Saito, Jiro Takidaira</strong> 林真美</td>
<td>The boy in this story was very timid but his daddy and grandpa were brave hunters. He would never go to toilet alone at night. There is a mochi tree growing outside the boy’s house. During the daytime, he would play around but when it is dark, he would feel the whole tree become a threatening monster. Nevertheless, his grandpa said that “This tree turns to the most spectacular tree at one night every year but this gorgeous scene only can be seen by courageous children.” One night, his grandpa was very sick and the boy was very anxious. He had to run to a doctor’s house at that night to get help. When the doctor took the boy and the medicine back to examine his grandpa, the boy saw the mocha tree became the most incredible rainbow tree he has never seen before. Eventually, his grandpa recovered and praised the boy who was very brave to save him at that night. After that, the boy would never feel afraid of the mochi tree at night time and darkness.</td>
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<td><strong>Een Buik Vol Geheimen</strong>/ <strong>A Tummy Full of Secrets</strong> 我不敢說 我怕被罵</td>
<td><strong>Pimm van Hest</strong> 謝靜雯</td>
<td>Moira is just as clumsy and a little bit naughty as all preschool children are. One day she accidentally pulled a hole in one of her stockings and she was afraid to tell her mom so she kept it as a secret. When Moira threw the pear her dad prepared for her lunch in the bin as she did not like it, she kept that as another secret. When she played a wedding game with Daniel and wore her mother’s wedding dress, she ruined the dress. Moira could not tell this to her mum so she had another secret in her belly now. In the evening dinner time, she gave her food to two dogs because her belly was full of secrets and she could not eat any food. Moira’s mum and dad were concerned about her bad appetite before she went to bed. Finally, Moira could not keep all the secrets at all so she cried and confessed her hidden secrets to her parents.</td>
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<td><strong>Who is number one</strong> 誰是第一名</td>
<td><strong>蕭湄羲</strong></td>
<td>Michael’s talent is drawing. He believes his drawing is the best in the world and his classmates could not compete with him so they all agree with his statement. However, no one likes his comments because Michael argues that everyone should draw the same thing as he does. One day, he is invited to be a judge of a drawing competition. He criticizes a dog’s picture, saying that the sun should be red. The dog does not appreciate this comment and answers him back that I have colour-blindness. Michael has never heard that and realized other participants’ perspectives of their drawings. Consequently, he recognizes each picture is number one because each one is unique and everyone views the world differently.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Anger</strong> 生氣</td>
<td><strong>Nakagawa, Hirotaka</strong></td>
<td>This story not only describes things people would be angry about but also discusses reasons people are angry. Peter is a clumsy boy. On Monday, he overslept so his mother was angry with him; on Tuesday,</td>
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<td>Story Themes</td>
<td>Name of Story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive thinking</td>
<td>Good news; Bad news 好消息 壞消息</td>
<td>Jeff Mack 呂嘉能</td>
<td>This story has only two lines for two characters, a rabbit and a rat. They are good friends but they are very different. In various scenarios the rat always says “bad news” whereas the rabbit always believes “good news.” For instance, when they went picnic, it started raining. The rat would say “bad news”, while the rabbit would say “good news” because he prepared an umbrella. Then, when the rat found out there was a bug in an apple, he said “bad news” whereas the rabbit took a strawberry cake and said “good news” as we could eat the cake. After few events, as the rat always thinks negatively, the rabbit is always positive thinking. The rabbit influences the rat to think positively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Hurra, gewonnen! Mist, verloren (Win and loss) 我輸了我贏了</td>
<td>Isabel Abedi &amp; Silvio Neuendorf 賓靜蓀</td>
<td>A goat and a goose are the best friend and love playing together. One day, they went to join their friend, a badger’s birthday party together. When the party finished, they went home separately as they fought in the party. There were a treasure-hunt game in the party and the goat won the big price, a green badge which the goose wanted most. The goose however lost the game and saw the goat won the badge; the goose took the goat’s crown away. When they got home, the winner did not feel happy, whereas the loser who took the crown away did not feel happy either. They both thought of regret for what they did to each other, so they went back to the place where they used to play with each other. The goat gave the green badge to the goose and the goose returned the crown to the goat. Now, they are laughing with each other again.</td>
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<td>So war das! Nein, so! Nein, so! (No! It’s not like that)</td>
<td>Kathrin Scharer 柯麗芬</td>
<td>A badger, a bear and a fox were playing blocks together. Suddenly, the tower they made by blocks was collapsed. Three of them started complaining about each other. The badger believes it is the bear’s fault but the bear says, no, no, no, that’s not how it happened. Then, he explains what he does to the tower</td>
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<td>Story Themes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single family</td>
<td>I have two homes</td>
<td>Marian De Smet, Zheng Ruyao</td>
<td>Nina has two homes. One is her father’s home and the other is her mother’s home. She sometimes stays with her daddy and sometime with her mommy. Nina however had one home only as her parents still</td>
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<td>Mommy and me，sometimes and daddy</td>
<td>高詠微</td>
<td>The story begins by mentioning that “We moved into a new apartment. We started our new life but only my mother and I. Sometimes I visit my father and he takes me to visit my grandparents. Only my father and I. We play soccer together without mother. My father and mother are no longer living together, so the new house is only my mother and I. When I miss my daddy, I can ask my mum to call him and vice versa. So, we can be together on the phone. In this new apartment, I cannot hear my parents’ fighting with each other. My mom and I watch my favourite cartoon with a new TV in the new apartment and next weekend when I visit my daddy, I will tell him about this interesting cartoon.”</td>
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<td>C’est ta faute! (It’s your fault!)</td>
<td>Evelyne Brisou-Pellen, 施瑞瑄</td>
<td>In a grassland, there is a pond which provides all the animals’ drinking water. One day, they assembled together and realized that there is no water in the pond. So, a flea pointed out an elephant and blamed him for drinking all water. The flea said “It is your fault.” The elephant explained that “No, it is not my fault. This is because hippo put salt in the water. It is his fault.” Then, the hippo blamed a rhinoceros, and the rhinoceros blamed an orangutan, and so forth. No one wants to acknowledge their mistake, leading to the drained pond.</td>
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<td>DIE BRUECKE (The bridge)</td>
<td>Heinz Janisch, 侯淑玲</td>
<td>A huge bear and a giant want to cross a river so they meet in the middle of the bridge. As the bridge is narrow and unstable, they cannot pass by on the bridge at the same time. The bear shakes his head and roars at the giant as the bear does not want to go back and give way to the giant, and vice versa. They refuse to budge; the bridge, however, is shaking severely and cannot support both weights. The giant said to the bear, “We have to find a solution.” After a while, the bear answered that “I have an idea. You can jump into the river, and I can keep going.” Of course, the giant would not accept this solution. He said that “Why don’t you jump into the river?” They do not want to compromise but they have to cross the river. Eventually, the giant provide a solution which is embracing each other and then slowly turning to the other side, so both can cross the river without sacrificing anyone’s dignity.</td>
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<td>不不不，不是那樣！是這樣！</td>
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<td>block and believes it is the fox’s fault. The fox says, no, no, no, that's not how it happened and believes it is the badger’s fault. Of course, the badger says, no, no, no, that's not how it happened. Because of the blamed each other, they fight until a squirrel stopped their argument. The squirrel on the tree sees everything happens during their playing, so he says that “if you do not listen to each other and let another finish their explanation, you would never know how it happened.” With the squirrel’s advice, the three of them reconcile.</td>
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<td>Story Themes</td>
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<td>loved each other at that time. Nina’s dad did something make her mom very angry at him, so they did not love each other anymore. They decided to stay in two different homes. Since then, everything has been changed and became different. Nina’s mom will not be mad at her even though she uses her mother’s lipstick to draw the wall. Nina’s daddy is upset all the time even though she tries to play a hide-and-seek game with him. When Nina stays with her dad, she will miss her mom and their pet; whereas when Nina stays with her mother, she will think of her daddy and his neighbour who always play with me. Wherever Nina stays, they talk on the phone every day and they kiss Nina on the phone. Every year Nina has two birthday parties. When Nina’s first swimming class commenced, her parents came to join me. The most important thing is Nina realizes her parents still love her although they do not live together.</td>
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Appendix N. Countryside Preschool teaching web – “My Family Occupation”

- Recognizing family members and roles, such as parents, grandparents, siblings, and relatives
- Understanding different occupations
- Learning how to interview

- Building houses using different art materials
- Observing various house styles
- Drawing my dream house or space
- Drawing shoes
- Drawing a gift to send to a friend

- Interview visiting parents’ regarding their jobs
- Reading family-related stories
- Sing songs
- Writing family letters
- Listening to stories
- Telling my family story

- Understanding parents’ or caregivers’ occupations
- Role-playing of my family life
- Discussing how I interact with my family members

A theme of a curriculum

Six learning domains

Potential learning content or activities

- Learning how to express emotions
- Discussing different emotions in different situations, such as when I feel angry or happy, what things make me happy or annoy me, and how I can deal with negative feeling, etc.
- Showing appreciation to parents and considering their feelings

Cognition

Aesthetic

Physical Movement

My Family Occupation

Language

Emotion

Social Interaction

- Hosting family-child games
- Dancing
- Playing outdoor games

Six learning domains

Potential learning content or activities
### Appendix O. Summary of resilience-orientated stories told in Countryside Preschool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Themes</th>
<th>Name of Story</th>
<th>Author/Translator</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separation anxiety</td>
<td>The Kissing Hand</td>
<td>Penn, Audrey; 劉清彦</td>
<td>Chester Racoon wants to stay at home with his mum and does not to go to preschool. His mother tries to convince him as he will make new friends, play with new toys, and read new storybooks at preschool. The most important thing is the mother gives him a special secret kiss on his palm, which makes him feel the kiss spreads from his hand, up to his arm and into his heart. Therefore, the warmth and love of his mother’s kiss is with him wherever he goes and he would never feel alone. The kiss not only comforts Chester Racoon but also his mother because he gives the same kiss back to his mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sibling conflict</td>
<td>Sophie and New Baby</td>
<td>Laurence Anholt; 柯倩華</td>
<td>One day, Sophie’s parents told Sophie that she was going to have a ‘real’ baby who can play with her. Sophie was very excited with this news but the baby took too long to arrive for Sophie. She almost forgot her parents’ words until a snowing night the new born baby arrived at midnight. She liked this ‘real’ baby in the first few days until she found out the baby would not play with her soon. Worst of all, the baby consumed Sophie’s parents’ time so much so she had to play alone. Sophie started complaining and asked to send the baby back; however, her parents told Sophie that ‘The baby would stay with us forever. He is not like your baby doll.’ Sophie was crying loudly and shouting ‘I DON’T WANT THAT BABY. I DON’T WANT THAT BABY ANYMORE!’ In the meantime, Sophie’s dad gave her a big hug and comforted her by saying that ‘I know you are upset, and I know everything is different for you now.’ Her mother cooked something special for her. When time goes by, the baby boy grew and began to response to Sophie and she liked this little brother more.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Tunnel</td>
<td>Anthony Browne; 陳瑞姍</td>
<td>They are siblings, called an older brother and younger sister. They are very different and fighting all the time. One day, the mother was annoying to deal with their quarrels so she asked them to go out and solved their arguments on their own. As they walked outside, the siblings were still fighting until the brother found a tunnel. The sister did not want to join her brother’s adventure, which is entering the tunnel because she thinks there are ghosts, monsters or some scary inside. However, her brother had already climbed in. The sister was waiting for her brother but still the brother did not appear. Eventually, the sister had to go and look for her brother through the tunnel. The other side of the tunnel is a quiet but dark forest. She wanted to go back but she was worried about her brother and so afraid of the darkness, so she ran very fast to try to find her brother. On finding her brother, she began to cry because the brother had become a stone. The sister’s tear broke the spell of the brother. In the end they mediated their disputes and became best friends.</td>
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</table>
Moira is just as clumsy and a little bit naughty as all preschool children are. One day she accidentally pulled a hole in one of her stockings and she was afraid to tell her mom so she kept it as a secret. When Moira threw the pear her dad prepared for her lunch in the bin as she did not like it, she kept that as another secret. When she played a wedding game with Daniel and wore her mother’s wedding dress, she ruined the dress. Moira could not tell this to her mum so she had another secret in her belly now. In the evening dinner time, she gave her food to two dogs because her belly was full of secrets and she could not eat any food. Moira’s mum and dad were concerned about her bad appetite before she went to bed. Finally, Moira could not keep all the secrets at all so she cried and confessed her hidden secrets to her parents.

Michael’s talent is drawing. He believes his drawing is the best in the world and his classmates could not compete with him so they all agree with his statement. However, no one likes his comments because Michael argues that everyone should draw the same thing as he does. One day, he is invited to be a judge of a drawing competition. He criticizes a dog’s picture, saying that the sun should be red. The dog does not appreciate this comment and answers him back that I have colour-blindness. Michael has never heard that and realized other participants’ perspectives of their drawings. Consequently, he recognizes each picture is number one because each one is unique and everyone views the world differently.

This story not only describes things people would be angry about but also discusses reasons people are angry. Peter is a clumsy boy. On Monday, he overslept so his mother was angry with him; on Tuesday, he was fussy about green pepper, so his mum was angry with him again; on Wednesday, he broke his dad’s vase, so his dad was angry with him; on Thursday, he fought with his sister, so his mum was angry with him; on Friday, he forgot to bring his homework, so his teacher was angry with him; on Saturday, he stole his neighbour’s fruit so the neighbour was angry with him; on Sunday, because Peter was late for a planned game, his friends were angry with him. Because everyone is angry with him, Peter thinks maybe he can find a place where no one would be angry with him. However, he eventually realized that place would be very boring and lonely. Why do people feel angry? If my sister plays my toys without putting them back when she has finished, I will be angry. If my mum throws away my favourite toys, I am certainly angry with her. If my dad breaks his promise, I can be angry with him too. Peter eventually knows that after he is angry, his mood is still unhappy. So, he starts to think about what he can do when he feels angry.

Potter is a mosquito, a contagious fire-breathing mosquito who likes to bite angry people most. Philip is
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breathing Dragon 我變成一隻噴火龍了</td>
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<td>the angriest dragon in his village. Potter bit Philip this morning and of course Philip was very angry. He shouted loudly at the mosquito. Unexpectedly, his mouth blew out a big flame when he was shouting. The fire burned out half of his house. Philip realizes that he becomes a fire-breathing dragon now. Whenever he opens his mouth, the flames will be out from his mouth. This causes a lot of trouble for him and others. For example, he burns his food when he wants to eat. He cannot go to see his dentist when he suffers from a toothache. When he emits a sneeze, he burns his best friend. Then, when everyone in the village enjoys swimming in the pool, Phillip’s fire heats up the pool. Now, no one likes Phillip as he burns everything close to him. He tries everything he can put out his fire but fails. In the end, his was exhausted and hungry so he started crying. By a miracle tears and sneezes put out the fire. Phillip becomes happy and does not get angry again.</td>
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<td>Dad Bear Never There 爸爸為什麼這麼忙</td>
<td>Heidi Howarth; Daniel Howarth 孔繁璐</td>
<td>Baby bear doubts his daddy loves him because the daddy is never at home. Daddy bear leaves home before his son wakes up and comes home after his son sleeps. One day, baby bear followed his daddy stealthily to see what he is doing. Baby bear saw that his daddy walked through a valley and a forest, climbed a river and mountain, and finally stopped in the front of a gorge. At this time, Baby bear already felt exhausted and hungry. Suddenly, while his daddy was picking up a few fish, he called baby bear to come and eat. In fact, daddy bear discovered his boy was following from the beginning. Baby bear finally knows the reason why his daddy is so busy. They spent the whole day together. Daddy bear teaches his boy how to catch fish and climb a tree to find honey, but also tells the boy that although he is not always at home, he tries his best to provide food as much as he can. This is because he loves baby bear and his family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment issues</td>
<td>Papa Oso 爸爸失業了</td>
<td>Cecilia Eudave Jacobo Muñiz 黃翠玲</td>
<td>Anna’s father would play with her and buy her ice cream and he is as wonderful as Anna’s friends”. Abruptly, Anna’s found out her daddy changed and became an impatient and angry bear. He started shouting at Anna and Anna’s mother without any reason. Even though Anna performed well at school, her daddy was not as happy as he used to. Anna’s mother told Anna that Daddy was under pressure. “Who is Mr. Pressure?” Anna tried to get rid of Mr. Pressure by spreading flour on the floor, so when Mr. Pressure came she could catch him. She set a lot of traps in the house but she still did not see Mr. Pressure. However, her daddy was trapped and became very angry at Anna. Anna initially cried and was very depressed at home and school. When Anna’s parents took her to see a psychologist, the doctor told them, “Your daughter was under pressure.” As Anna heard what the doctor mentioned about “pressure,” she was immediately jumping out the bed and saying “I found it, I found Mr. Pressure, so my daddy would not become a terrible daddy anymore.” When the daddy heard Anna’s word, he gently embraced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Interrupting Chicken</td>
<td>David Ezra Stein 宋珮</td>
<td>It is a bedtime and Papa is going to read the bedtime story to his daughter. Papa reminds her not to interrupting while he is telling the story. However, the girl cannot help herself so she keeps disturbing Papa’s storytelling. For instance, when Papa is telling the story, called Little Red Riding Hood, in the middle of the story where Little Red meets a stranger who is the bad wolf, the girl would jump into the story to save Little Red by saying “He is a wolf. Don’t listen to him and talk to him.” Papa has to stop telling the story because his daughter interrupts and tells the rest of the story. Therefore, Papa does not tell any bedtime story; on the contrary, the girl tells a story instead. However, while Papa does not disturb the story by finishing rest of the story, he goes to sleep when the girl began her storytelling.</td>
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Appendix P. Coast Preschool teaching web – “Night Market”

- Recognizing the name of snacks, and games in a night market
- Recognizing 1-10 and learning addition to 10

- Preparing to open a shop in the game of a night market
- Drawing the games in the night market
- Drawing paper money to play in the games of the night market

- Reading textbooks
- Singing songs
- Writing the value of the money in number
- Listening to stories
- Telling my family story

- Understanding the relationship between customers and owners
- Role-playing of night markets
- Discussing how I interact with either customers or owners

- Learning how to express emotions
- Recognizing different emotions in different situations, such as when I feel angry or happy, what things I am afraid or annoying me, and how I can deal with negative feelings, etc.
### Appendix Q. Summary of resilience-orientated stories told in Coast Preschool

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Themes</th>
<th>Name of Story</th>
<th>Author/Translator</th>
<th>Outline of Story</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separation anxiety</td>
<td>The Kissing Hand</td>
<td>Penn, Audrey</td>
<td>Chester Raccoon wants to stay at home with his mum and does not to go to preschool. His mother tries to convince him as he will make new friends, play with new toys, and read new storybooks at preschool. The most important thing is the mother gives him a special secret kiss on his palm, which makes him feel the kiss spreads from his hand, up to his arm and into his heart. Therefore, the warmth and love of his mother’s kiss is with him wherever he goes and he would never feel alone. The kiss not only comforts Chester Raccoon but also his mother because he gives the same kiss back to his mother.</td>
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<td>Wemberly Worried</td>
<td>Kevin Henkes</td>
<td>Lily worries about everything. No matter if it is big things or small things; it is morning, night or day. She is so worried. Although her papa, mum, and grandma always tell her, “You worry too much” she still cannot stop worrying. Lily worries the big tree in the backyard might fall, the gap in the living room that might have a monster inside, central heating ducts were a snake lives, the swing in a playground that might fall due to a failed screw, her favourite doll that might disappear one day and so on. Although her papa, mum, and grandma keep telling her, “Don’t worry” she still worries. When Lily is worried about something else, she rubs her doll’s ears. The doll’s ears are almost dropping off. Very soon, Lily starts to worry her new school. Her worries go on and on and she cannot stop. On the day Lily’s parents bring her to a preschool; her teacher introduces another girl who never stops worrying to Lily. For a little while, Lily and this girl play together and exchange their dolls. Soon, Lily knows she has less worries.</td>
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<td>Emotional issues</td>
<td>The dark</td>
<td>Lemony Snicket</td>
<td>Ray is a little boy who is afraid of darkness. The darkness and Ray stay in the same big house. Ray knows that sometimes the darkness is in the clothes wardrobe while sometimes the darkness is behind the curtains. During the daytime, the darkness only stays in the basement of the house whereas it is everywhere at night. Ray thinks that if he visits the darkness once, it might not come to Ray’s room. Nevertheless, the darkness still comes to Ray’s room one night. Ray asks the darkness, “What do you want?” The darkness replies, “I want to show you something.” The darkness guides Ray to its room in the basement. Ray was reluctant to go with the darkness but he still feel curious to know what the darkness wants to show him. The darkness gives Ray a little lamp to light in his room at night time. After that, Ray has never felt afraid of the darkness.</td>
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<td>À l’ombre d’un loup/ In</td>
<td>François Tardif</td>
<td>A wolf boy and his parents live near a river in the forest, and he has many friends playing with him.</td>
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<td>The Shadow of A Wolf</td>
<td>陳怡潔</td>
<td>He is very naughty and likes some competitions. Sometimes he pretends he is howling, his sister would be afraid of him and run away. However, he has a secret which makes him feel scared. Every night, he sees so many monsters running around in his room. Even though he hides himself in the bed, he still cannot sleep. Until his parents sent him many gifts, such as a bear, an orangutan, and a blue bird toys, he feels they can protect him at night time. Although he knows his toy friends will protect him at night, he still sees a big shadow at night which makes the wolf boy scared. Until he bear toy tells him, “You should not feel afraid of the shadow” then, he found out that is his shadow at night time. The wolf boy realized that, so he will never be afraid at night again.</td>
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<td>Wenn Anna Angst hat/</td>
<td>Heinz Janisch</td>
<td>This story is written in verse. It repeats a sentence, “When Anna is afraid, she calls her friends to protect her.” So, when Anna is afraid, she calls non-sleep giant, 33 knights in walnuts, a green dragon, an angel, a magic painter, a lucky cat, and forth. Then, finally, Anna would call herself loudly and says, “Anna Is Not Afraid.” Therefore, she can sleep and her protective friends can fall asleep as well, but the giant is always protecting everyone.</td>
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<td>When Anna Is Afraid</td>
<td>李紫蓉</td>
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<td>安娜害怕的時候</td>
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<td>Niemand mag mich/</td>
<td>Raoul Krischanitz</td>
<td>Bob moved to a new town and knew no one in the town. He felt lonely and bored, so when Bob saw a rat, he asked the rat politely, “Can you play with me?” But the rat was in rush, replied roughly, “No” and left very quickly. Bob thought that the rat did not like me. Then, Bob decided to find another friend so he walked pass a cat’s house. Bob saw there were three cats sitting on the window and looking unfriendly to him, so he thought that the three cats did not like him. And then Bob met three rabbits playing a hide-and-seek game, but when they found Bob was watching them, they ran away. Bob now believed that they did not like him at all. Just like that, as Bob could not find someone who wanted to play with him, he began to cry. A fox saw Bob and asked him, “Why are you crying?” Bob told the fox as no one liked him. When the fox asked Bob the reason none liked him, Bob did not know. Therefore, the fox suggested Bob, “We should go back and ask them.” Surprisingly, Bob having the answers from the animal friends he met before was not the reason he was crying for. None of them refused to play with Bob or be Bob’s friend. In the end of the story, Bob made so many friends.</td>
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<td>Nobody likes me</td>
<td>宋珮</td>
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<td>沒有人喜歡我</td>
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<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Thank You!</td>
<td>李美華、蔣惠玲</td>
<td>A rhinoceros and a black bird were good friends and helping each other. The black bird would kill body louses for the rhinoceros and the black bird was protected by the rhinoceros. However, one day, they fought and no longer appreciated each other, so they were not friends anymore. The rhinoceros asked an eagle to scratch his back as there were body louses inside his skin, but the eagle</td>
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<td>relationship</td>
<td>謝謝你</td>
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<td>did not know how to grab the body louses. The rhinoceros asked different friends to help him and there was none of them doing it better than the black bird. One day, as he could not bear itch he asked the black bird to help him when seeing the black bird was catching something in a crocodile’s mouth. But the bird rejected him and said, “Sorry. I am busy helping the crocodile and prefer to help him.” The rhinoceros was very disappointed as he heard that. After a few days, he heard the black bird was screaming somewhere and he realized the bird must be in danger. The rhinoceros also understood that he and the black bird cannot live without each other at this moment, so he decided to go and save his friend. The black bird felt embarrassed when he was rescued by the rhinoceros. The bird said, “Thank You” to the rhinoceros; the rhinoceros replied to the bird, “I should say Thank You to you earlier” in return. As a result, they became best friends again.</td>
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<td>Self-assurance</td>
<td>I Am Special 我是特別的</td>
<td>林真卿</td>
<td>A dog Bob lives with his father and mother in the forest. His father has a business which is a shoes shop in a town. They look after Bob and love him so much. However, there are two things that Bob cares so much about. One thing is his hair colour differs from his parents and some neighbours tease Bob about his identity. The other is Bob’s legs are not equal long and as a result he does not like to play with peers. One day, Bob receives a phone call from his father who forgets to bring his customer’s shoes to his shop and unfortunately Bob’s mother is not at home. Bob considers his father’s worry and says he can deliver the shoes to his father’s shop. It was a long way to reach his father’s shop as Bob has to pass a narrow bridge, hits heavy rain and thunder storm, and finally he arrived to his father’s shoes shop. Although the shoes are wet owing to the rain, the customer and Bob’s father are all proud of what Bob does. The customer praises Bob for his courage and says that, &quot;Bob is a special kid.” After the customer leaves, Bob ask his father, “Am I special because my legs are not equal and my hair colour is different from you?” His father tells Bob, “A person’s heart is more important than his appearance. You are special is because you are thoughtful and brave.” After that, Bob forgets the difference and feels happiness surrounding him.</td>
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<td>Pick Me! 選我</td>
<td>Greg Gormley 曹以琪</td>
<td>Today is the day that an animal shelter hosts an adoption event. Jo knows that many celebrities, politicians and superstars will come to adopt animals, so when a little girl smiles to Jo, he does not look at her. However, when a ballet superstar passed by, Jo begins to dance and jump high in the air and says “Pick Me!” Suddenly, Jo falls in mud and gets a lot of dirt on his ballet skirt so the superstar leaves. Then, a movie star looks at Jo. Jo tries his best to juggle with balls and others, and says “Pick Me,” but he messes up again. Obviously, the movie star runs away from Jo. A few moments later, Jo attempts to attract attention by showing what he can do, which all turns to be a</td>
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<td>big joke. Jo is very</td>
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<td>big joke. Jo is very disappointed and talks to himself, “No one will pick me.” Unexpectedly, Jo hears a sound that “Don’t worry. There is someone who will definitely pick you.” The voice is from the little girl. The girl washes Jo and cleans up his mess. Now, Jo can perform very well. Suddenly, the superstar, movie star, and others all want to adopt Jo; however, Jo now understands who will be his master, which is the little girl.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Story Themes</td>
<td>Rosi in der Geisterbahn/ I Can Do It 我就是做得到</td>
<td>Philip Waechter 洪翠娥</td>
<td>Rose was woken by her terrible nightmare so she decided to find a specialist to help her. The doctor told her that it is not too severe and recommended a book that teaches Rose how to deal with the fear of her nightmares. Rose learnt many solutions from the book. For example, the first step is looking hard at a monster; the second step is overarm throw the monster. If the monster still lives, the last step is running as fast as you can. When Rose knew how to deal with monsters, she went to a theme park. Rose bought a ticket and read her book again to make sure all the strategies before going to a haunted house. When Rose saw a lot of monsters surrounding her, she began her first strategy and then she fought with all the monsters in the haunted house. Finally, the last giant monster left. Rose walked towards him and kissed him. All of a sudden, all the monsters and ghosts were running away. Rose was laughing hard but the manager in the haunted house was mad at Rose’s behaviour. To celebrate Rose’s success, she ate three ice creams.</td>
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<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Mutig, Mutig/ Who Is The Bravest 誰最有勇氣</td>
<td>Lorenz Pauli 陳淮茵</td>
<td>A rat, snail and frog sit beside a pond and a bird see three of them sitting there so the bird asked, “Why are you all sitting here?” The frog says, “We are going to compete and see who is the bravest.” The bird joins the competition. The rat is the first one who says he is going to swim in the pond without breathing but the frog looks unsatisfied as he can swim freely. While hearing that, the rat argues, “I am not a frog. Swimming for a rat is amazing.” The bird and snail agree with the rat, so after the rat’s swimming, everyone praises the rat “Well done.” The frog then wants to show his bravery by eating a big leaf and stopping eating any insects for a day. The snail looks unsatisfied as he can eat leaves every day. However, the frog argues, “I am not a snail. Eating vegetables for a frog needs courage.” The rat and bird agree with the frog, so after eating a big leaf the frog is hailed as a brave hero. Then, the snail says she wants to show she can climb outside of her shell and come back to the shell, but the bird is not satisfied by the snail’s idea as the bird did not go back to his egg shell since the day he was born. However, the rat comforts the snail saying that “the egg shell is different from the snail’s.” Therefore, after the snail’s show, everyone agree that the snail is brave. The last one is the bird who always talks and never stops but now he is quiet. After a whole, the frog understands the bird’s performance and the others all get the idea. Finally, they all agree that...</td>
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<td>No Fear 什麼都不怕</td>
<td>哲也</td>
<td>The story is written in verse. To-Bob is a special man who is not afraid of anything. He is not afraid of being abused, teased, having no friend, climbing to a high place, eating spicy foods, spiders, cockroaches, snakes, having an injection, darkness or even monsters or ghosts. Because of that, a lot of ghosts and monsters are not happy. They tell To-Bob, “We want to kill you and eat you.” When To-Bob hears that, he says that if you add salt, spring onion, toast and chilli sauce the taste will be better. The ghosts and monsters think that To-Bob should feel scared but he is not. Because of that, the ghosts and monsters cannot eat To-Bob who is not afraid. Then, after making friends with all the ghosts and monsters, To-Bob meets a bad king who is always abusing and bullying others. The king is angry at To-Bob who is not afraid of him, so the king takes away all To-Bob has in his house. To-Bob asked the king to release his bird, flowers, an egg and a watermelon because To-Bob acknowledges that he is afraid of a war, tears, sick people who cannot see a doctor, lovers who need to separate, a fight and natural disasters. As the bad king hears To-Bob’s confess, the king is even angrier. So, he asks his soldiers to throw To-Bob down a cliff. When To-Bob is dropping, all the ghosts and monsters come to save him. As before To-Bob is thrown off cliff, the king promises To-Bob to help poor people, protect his people, and look after children. And so, even though To-Bob is not dead, the king still has to do what he promised to To-Bob.</td>
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<td>Pillow of Cloud 白雲枕頭</td>
<td>張晉霖</td>
<td>A rabbit and piggy are good friends, but one day they fight with each other. They are not friends any more. The piggy shouts at the rabbit that “I wish you become a black rabbit.” The rabbit also shouts back to the piggy that, “I wish you cannot sleep at night.” When they go home, the rabbit wants to take a shower but she finds her hair and skin has become black. She is very nervous but she cannot make them clean. Similarly, the piggy cannot sleep although he counts 1 to 200. At that night, both are worried that their wishes of evil to each other has become true. The next day, when they incidentally meet the piggy sees the rabbit’s hair and skin has turned black, he feels very sorry for the rabbit. So, the piggy runs to the top of a mountain to catch clouds because he believes if the rabbit can use the white clouds to wash her hair, she will become white again. After collecting the clouds, the piggy runs to the rabbit home. Very soon, the rabbit’s skin and hair becomes white again. Then, the rabbit makes a pillow of clouds for the piggy so he can now sleep well.</td>
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Appendix R. Four preschoolers’ resilience stories

Appendix H relates two resilience stories in Urban Preschool and two stories in Countryside Preschool.

- Emily’s resilience was enhanced by comforting her sense of loss after the death of her grandparents.
- Angela’s resilience was cultivated by developing her speaking confidence.
- Grace’s resilience was improved by bridging the gap of lived experiences between family and preschool.
- Annabella’s resilience was manifested after her emotional needs were satisfied.

For my future publication purpose, the author omitted the content of these four children’s narratives and interpretations. If readers would like to read this part, please contact the author directly by email (s2908178@griffithuni.edu.au).