

Chapter 1

Introduction

Bilingual education is one of five new types of school under the project of the Bureau of Education Innovation Development. The project has been processing since 1994. The objective is to develop learners to reach international standards. Ministry of Education has to prepare two parallel lines for learners which are a normal track for general learners and a fast track for learners who have especially fast acceleration. Nowadays, the bilingual education does not have standards and indicators, including internal educational quality assurance which is needed for controlling, monitoring and evaluating this type of education. Therefore, this research aims to study standards and indicators as well as to develop internal educational quality assurance of bilingual education. This study will lead to the development of bilingual education in the Thai education system. This chapter presents the background and the importance of the problem, research questions, objectives of the research, scopes of the research, and benefits of the research.

1.1 Background and the importance of the problem

The change of world society in the 21st century has an impact on every country. Thailand sees a necessity to develop further so that it will be ready for the world of competition. A lot of reformations have been done including the reformation of education. The 1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand prescribed to reform the whole education system, including learning reformation, administration and management system reformation, teacher and educational personnel reformation, resource system and educational investment reformation. The objective of the reformation is to develop high quality human resources which are the foundation of sustainable development. The basic concept is the quality of education depends on the cooperation of schools, the support from community or organizations nearby schools, and the help from responsible department. The national policy has prescribed a systematic education development that has a support plan for educational innovation and budgets. Moreover, it also prescribes the integration with neighbor countries in

order to enhance the negotiation and network on behalf of the ASEAN Community. The ASEAN Community was established by Thailand in 1967. The ASEAN Community agreed on developing itself to become a strong and competent community in the 13th ASEAN Summit in 1997. On that agenda, the leader of ASEAN has signed the ASEAN Charter that prescribed ASEAN Community to cooperated on three pillars which are ASEAN Political and Security Community – APSC, ASEAN Economic Community – AEC, and ASEAN Socio Cultural Community – ASCC. ASEAN Community consists of 10 countries which are Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, and Thailand. English is used as the common language (AEC Information Center, 2012). The preparation needs to be made for Thailand before entering the ASEAN Community as well as for Thai society before entering modern world. High quality human capital and intellectual capital have to be created for the country to survive in a society where knowledge is the main factor of economic and social system. The Office of the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education has been designated to be the central authority in collaboration with other organizations. It has to prepare and develop teachers, educational personnel, students, and citizen to be ready for becoming ASEAN Community in 2015. The action plan is five years from 2011 to 2015. Within the scope of three pillars and five policies, Thai government has allocated a budget of 3,000 million Baht for a five-year processing plan. Thai government desires to set Thailand as a center of education in the ASEAN region. The target is to have at least 100,000 foreign students study in Thailand in 2014. Ministry of Education is the main institution in managing the education of the country. It has to develop all levels of Thai education and educational quality as well as support the education format to reach international standards of education. The Office of the Basic Education Commission has prescribed World-Class Standard School to be an innovative education management and is used as a strategy to enhance the quality of education comparable to international standards as well as enhance the students to have capacities equivalent to international students. This project has been processing since 2010. It has three important objectives which are; to develop students to become citizens of the world, to give education is comparable to international standards, and to manage the system with quality (Upper Secondary Education Bureau, 2012). The target is to set 500 schools to be pioneers. These schools are schools with high availability and

English Program (EP) schools or bilingual schools that educate by English language according to Thai curriculum except for Thai language and/or Thai history subjects. The goals are students have abilities in communicating in English and are familiar with the use of English language (Bureau of Education Innovation Development, 2012).

To achieve the objectives of the 1999 Education Act and 2002 edited (No. 2) section 6, the standard and educational quality assurance Statute 47 prescribed the educational quality assurance system to develop educational quality and standards for every level including both internal and external quality assurance systems. Statute 48 prescribed responsible department and educational institutions to have internal quality assurance system in educational institutions and the internal quality assurance was one part of the educational administration. The process must be done continuously and an annual report must be presented, to related department and the public, for the development of quality and standards of education, and for the external quality evaluation. Statute 49 prescribed the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment to be a public organization whose duty was to develop protocols for external quality evaluation and to evaluate education results. It has to consider about objectives, principles, and guidelines of education for every level according to the Education Act that stipulates that an external quality evaluation of educational institutions must be held once in five years. The evaluation results must be presented to responsible department and the public under the rationale: 1) to build confidence and satisfaction in the quality of education, 2) to prevent problems which requires planning and preparing, 3) to remain on the development of profession, 4) to be able to operate, monitor, and evaluate themselves, 5) to emphasize on the quality operations at every step, 6) to create knowledge, skills, and confidence to the personnel in the educational institutions, 7) to integrate within the organization and personnel in the area, and 8) to emphasize on the leadership of the manager. The general target is 1) to know the quality level of educational institutions in carrying out various missions, 2) to urge educational institutions to improve the quality of education and management performance, 3) to know the progress of the quality development of educational institutions, 4) to report conditions and developments of quality and standard of educational institutions to the public and related department. Additionally, the specific target is 1) to verify the actual status of operation of educational institutions, to effectively assess the quality of

education based on standards of education, and to assess the educational quality assurance comparability of educational institutions and responsible department, 2) to gather information that reflects strong points and weak points, conditions of success, and the cause of problem of educational institutions, 3) to propose ways to improve and develop the quality of education to educational institutions and responsible department, 4) to support educational institutions to continuously develop quality and internal educational quality assurance, 5) to report on the quality assessment results and standards of educational institutions to the public and responsible department. The rules and educational quality assurance methods are prescribed by the Regulations of the Ministry that stipulates that the internal educational quality assurance is one part of the educational administration. The process of continuous education development consists of 1) management and information systems, 2) developing the educational standards, 3) planning on the quality of education developing, 4) progressing according to the quality of education developing plan, 5) monitoring and reviewing the quality of education, 6) evaluating the quality of education, 7) reporting on the quality of education annually, and 8) upholding the educational quality assurance. The process of educational quality assurance consists of three steps: 1) Quality Control is the process of responsible department and educational institutions that prescribes educational standards comparable to national educational standards. Responsible department and educational institutions then make a plan to use as a guideline in processing quality development. They have to reach standards prescribed for curriculums, development media for teachers and personnel, charter of schools, teaching procedures, guidance, education arrangement, and evaluation. The emphasis is on the system and mechanism of processing, monitoring, and directing. 2) Quality Audit is the process of responsible department and educational institutions that confirms targets towards desired standards. The process is 2.1) the educational institutions have to monitor and review the implementation of the whole system. The gathered data is used to continuously improve and develop education arrangement as well as to report to parents and responsible education arrangers, 2.2) the responsible department has to monitor and review the quality of education of educational institutions. It has to support and/or use standards in promoting the development of quality education to meet the prescribed educational standards. 3. Quality Assessment is to assess the quality level of activity in certain

departments such as quality of education, quality of research, quality of teaching, etc. The quality assessment uses a self-study and self-assessment methods. The external quality evaluation is processed by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment to assess and certify that the educational institutions have the quality prescribed by standards of education.

Although Thailand has reformed the education for a decade (1999-2008) and is now in the second decade of reformation, the reformation results still have not reached the expected goals, especially the monitoring system. It is found that the internal educational quality assurance system of schools does not have enough quality. The schools do not take this issue seriously but only emphasize on improving just to pass the external quality evaluation (National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS), 2011). The result of NIETS is consistent with 153 reports of Yaowatiwa Nammakhun (2013) on quality assurance that were published from 1999 to 2012. The research found that 76 percent of schools had objectives to study the processing results, problems, and needs as well as to develop the internal educational quality assurance. They found that the educational quality assurance system still had many problems such as the personnel lacked understanding, the personnel lacked of awareness of the importance of quality assurance, and the quality assurance system management was not preceded according to the quality assurance process. In addition, 53 reports of Yaowatiwa Nammakhun (2012) on bilingual education that were published from 2003 to 2011 found that bilingual schools also had problems of internal educational quality assurance. The research found that the educational quality assurance system increased workload for Thai teachers because foreign teachers did not understand about it. In other words, the curriculum and the educational quality assurance caused workload inequality between Thai and foreign teachers. The Office of the Basic Education Commission is a responsible department for the standards and indicators prescribed by the Ministry of Education and the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment uses these standards and indicators as a guideline in determining the educational standards of bilingual schools. It is found that they are not consistent with schools that have special educational goals. Besides, the study of Yaowatiwa Nammakhun (2013) on conditions and problems of education in bilingual schools in Chiang Mai indicated that bilingual schools encountered many problems in management, curriculum development, teaching and

studying, measurement and evaluation, and monitoring and evaluating education. The standards and indicators, which are the frame of process to achieve the objectives of bilingual education, were clearly lacked. Actually, bilingual schools still do not have standards and indicators as well as their own educational quality assurance system for every level. Instead, they have to use educational quality assurance criteria of the Office of the Basic Education Commission and the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment in prescribing standards and indicators. As mentioned earlier, the schools do not construct the system with quality; they only focus on passing the external quality evaluation and do not use evaluation results for improvement and development even though bilingual schools special and different context and objectives from normal schools. This founding is consistent with 53 reports of Yaowatiwa Nammakhun (2012) on bilingual education that were published from 2003 to 2011. This suggests that the quality of bilingual education should be evaluated annually. Standards and indicators of bilingual education need to be examined as well in order to achieve the real targets of education and to support students, who are resources of Thailand, to have standards and abilities in competing with other civilized countries. Nevertheless, due to the time and resource restrictions, the researcher only studied the appropriate age to start learning a second language. The study has found that many researchers have studied about this issue. For example, Kriengsukdi Syananondh and Watana Padgate (2005) found that students who started studying English since kindergarten level got higher score in basic English university course than students who started studying English in grade 1 and grade 5 with a significant statistics level of 0.05. This result is consistent with the research result of Carroll (1980). He indicates that the opportunity of using a second language even just a little during childhood may be an important factor of success in learning second language later. Exposing to or use language during childhood stimulates the working of brain system which helps learning language later very much. Moreover, many academicians have expressed their opinion about the appropriate age to learn a second language. For instance, Lenneberg (1967) has suggested the optimum age hypothesis of learning language. The hypothesis claims that the good period of learning language is before entering reproductive age which is the time that cerebral lateralization completely develops. Brown (1994) said that after this period, second language learners may not be able to speak a second language as their native language.

Scovel (1988) suggested that due to the plasticity of the brain before reproductive age, children could learn not only the first language but also the second language as well. However, when the brain is fully developed, it will be more difficult to learn and use a second language fluently. Walsh & Diller (1981) studied language learning of different age groups of children. They found that younger children had better pronunciation, and after a childhood period, learners will have a rural accent which is difficult to adjust. Thus, it is concluded that to develop the internal educational quality assurance of bilingual schools for every level, early childhood level is the first place where the researcher should conduct the study since it will have an effect on the following levels of education.

The development of internal educational quality assurance of bilingual schools in early childhood level can indicate the success of bilingual education as well as provide feedback to develop education systematically so that it leads to a real practice based on the assessment. Boorapatis Ploysuwan (2012) has given a definition of this concept as assessing the value or meaning of the information or the occurrence of an event which requires the evaluation by comparing between the gathered information and the set criteria. Then the value or meaning is used as a focus or approach of improvement, change, and revision for better results. This concept is consistent with the objectives of the researcher that aim to create and develop the internal educational quality assurance of bilingual schools in early childhood level. The creation and development is mainly based on the standards and indicators of the schools and aims to use assessment result for planning, continuous developing, and achieving goals which will finally be a sustainable development. The format will demonstrate the relationship of elements of the internal educational quality assurance: 1) Objectives of the internal educational quality assurance format of bilingual schools for early childhood level, 2) Standards and indicators of the internal educational quality assurance of bilingual schools for early childhood level, 3) Process of the internal educational quality assurance based on the standards and indicators including responsible person, quality control methods, quality check methods, and assessment methods and evaluation criteria, 4) Report and development plan for the internal educational quality assurance format to be a mechanism leading to the development of quality education in the right direction, which enhance the quality of students and country.

1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 What are standards and indicators of Internal Educational Quality Assurance for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level?

1.2.2 How is Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level?

1.2.3 How is the result of Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

1.3.1 To synthesize standards and indicators of Internal Educational Quality Assurance for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level

1.3.2 To construct and develop Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level

To study and analyze the result of Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level

1.4 Scopes of the Research

1.4.1 Scopes on the content

1) The standards and indicators of Internal Educational Quality Assurance for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level development have 3 parts: The processing of Quality Control, Quality Audit and Quality Assessment.

2) The Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level have 6 factors: the goal of model, standards and indicators, the process of model, the assessment criterion, the assessor characteristic, the evaluation program and handbook of the model

3) The Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level assessment uses Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation (Rattana Buoson, 2013: 183-186). There are 4 parts included: utility, feasibility, accuracy and propriety.

1.4.2 Scopes on Population

The population in this research including director, the head of academic department, the person who responsible on internal assurance and teacher in Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level from 139 schools around Thailand for 3,059 people (Bureau of educational innovation development, 2012)

1.5 Definitions

Standards means the regulation or level of education quality for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level about characteristic and desirable quality of Internal assurance.

Indicators mean the thing to tell the standard or desirable quality achievement on internal evaluation for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level

The model of Internal Educational Quality Assurance means the structure and procedure of systematic education administration for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level including 3 system as the followings.

Quality Control means the process of checking, controlling and monitoring quality of education for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level according to the standards and indicators of education quality by the quality control steering committee.

Quality Audit means the process of searching and checking evidence from the quality control process and self-assessment report by the quality audit steering committee, so that can get the information which improve quality education according to the standards of education

Quality Assessment means the process of education quality evaluation on how much it can follow criterion and standards by the quality assessment steering committee.

Quality of Model means the characteristic of Internal Educational Quality Assurance Model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level evaluated by experts and participating samples according to 4 aspects which are utility, feasibility, accuracy and propriety

Utility quality means the model can give needed data to users include director, teachers, parent of student and relevant participate. In addition, it can use to develop and improve operation realistically.

Feasibility quality mean the model can be used in reality, related with authentic, appropriate with the present and accepted from relevant people.

Propriety quality means the model is appropriate for the schools context and relevant people, conform to the goal of education plan and does not have effect to relevant participate.

Accuracy quality means the model in each component have to be correct, clear and reliable according to principle, concept and theory.

Trial result in Quality Assessment part mean the result of Internal Educational quality assessment of school in Early Childhood Education Level 3 schools including a large school, a middle school, and a small school which are different management structure according to standards and indicators of model. They are 3 factors including 1) The committee of quality assessment 2) quality assessment 3) SAR

1.6 Benefits of the Research

1.6.1 This study can list the standards and indicators of Internal Educational Quality Assurance for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level. And director, teacher, related people and school can use standards and indicators to analyze and make Internal Educational Quality Assurance plane. In addition, They can use information from the model to revise and develop quality of the school according to goal of school curriculum.

1.6.2 This study can produce Internal Educational Quality Assurance model for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level and director, teacher, related people and school can use information from the model to guidelines in Internal Educational Quality Assurance.

1.6.3 Those interested of Internal Educational Quality Assurance for Bilingual Schools in Early Childhood Education Level can bring model to apply in the school.

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