

Curriculum Center for Teachers
Tokyo Gakugei Univ.

Creative Curricula & Teaching
Newsletter

English Edition
No. 6 December 2011

A Massive Complex Disaster, Teacher and School, and Teacher Education

Hatsuo Mitsuishi

Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University

There was a six grade teacher who encouraged children to draw pictures with the theme of "kizuna" (bonds) and tried to display them on a classroom wall. One of three cheerful girls explained that they drew pictures of their families, wishing "My dad and I could find my missing mom and live a happy life together." — What did the teacher do with the pictures?

Looking at the pictures, the home-room teacher was unable to post them, shedding tears that "I have understood nothing."

("NHK Special" re-aired on September 19, 2011)

On the occasion of a massive complex disaster like this, what would I have done? While such an "imaginary" question has been asked over and over again, the Curriculum Center for Teachers too has asked itself what teachers, schools, and "people involved in education" should do and think. In the preceding issue of this newsletter, we received a report on the actual conditions of disaster areas from Prof. Kenichi Tabata, Miyagi University of Education. Thanks to his great cooperation and help, we also had an opportunity to visit three schools in Sendai and Ishinomaki cities. Realizing that our impressions might be localized and fragmentary, we started over by asking people who suffered from the disaster to give their perceptions of life and work before and after "March 11" as a member engaged in teacher education: (i) What do you think of the roles and functions of teachers and schools? (ii) How do you feel about the relations with parents, citizens, and local communities? and (iii) What and how do future people involved in education envision how teachers and schools should be?

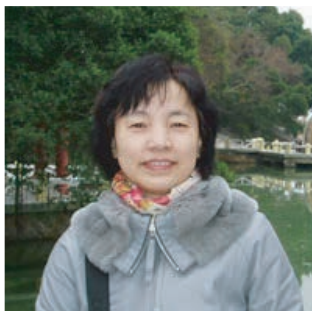
On August third and fourth, we (Center Director Prof. Sakai, Prof. Iwata, Prof. Tabata, and I) made a visit to Y elementary school near the coast of Sendai city, I elementary school near the Tohoku Shinkansen Sendai Station, and I prefectural high school. The buildings of Y elementary school had been made unusable by the tsunamis. I high school had been affected by seawater inundation of the school buildings. I elementary school had voluntarily made the school buildings "open to the public" as an evacuation center near Sendai Station and had served that role for about two weeks.

In the case of Y elementary school, all homes had been affected by the tsunamis. We were unable to even step into the area around the school at the time of the visit. On the day of the earthquake, facing the dilemma of having to evacuate children but having no time for discussion, the principal used his head when he heard "What are you doing? Tsunami are coming!" He went beyond the conventional limits of instruction, ignoring the usual guide of "The rule says this." For teachers engaged in educational activities during the disaster-stricken life afterwards, he pointed out the importance to continue to have a sense of purpose and "fulfillment." I elementary school voluntarily made a part of the school buildings "open to the public" before receiving a request to set up an evacuation center. Based on his own experience following the Chile Earthquake and its consequent tsunami, the principal assembled children in the middle of the schoolyard and handed them over to their parents, or took them to their homes. It was just before seven the next morning when the last one went home. In addition, the principal supplied and distributed food and played a role of addressing complaints. He placed an emphasis on "a proud sense of mission." The principal of I high school coped with difficult situations such as obtaining water and heaters and making rules for disaster-stricken life by gathering together teachers' knowledge under the circumstances that the whole area including the school buildings was inundated by more than 1 m of water. He said what he noticed from observing the teachers who sought the best direction was the flexibility that made use of their expertise, such as that of electrical technology, under restricted circumstances that were clearly out-of-the-ordinary.

In "Manual of Tsunami Disaster Education" (2009) published by Kamaishi city, which escaped the massive tsunami disaster, readers are encouraged and advised to "Do the best you can in the situation." The "maximum" voluntary judgment is necessary in a society with a high risk of widespread natural and random disasters of human or infrastructural origin. I think that every piece of varied experience and knowledge related to a location surely accumulates as a primal experience, but an important task is how to adapt and embody them in the challenges of teacher education.

New International Visiting Professor

Dr. Shuwen Li Northeast Normal University, China



I am Shuwen Li from Northeast Normal University. After graduating from Yitong Normal School of Jilin province in 1981, I worked in a district middle school as a mathematics teacher. Through teaching and learning mathematics, I became increasingly interested in mathematics

teaching methods. During 1984–1988, I studied for a bachelor's degree in the Department of Mathematics at Northeast Normal University and later worked as a teacher there. During 1996–2000, I studied for a master's degree at Miyagi University of Education in Japan. Subsequently, I returned to Northeast Normal University and worked to train middle school teachers. In 2006, I obtained a Ph.D. in Education from the School of Education Science at Northeast Normal University.

Since 1996, when I studied at Miyagi University of Education, I conducted a comparative study of primary and secondary school mathematics education of Japan and China. Later, I conducted research on a comparative study of Japanese and Chinese mathematics education, which centered on current primary and secondary school mathematics curriculum goals, contents and layout, etc., and

on primary and secondary school mathematics textbook composition as well as writing characteristics and other skills. Consequently, I identified the primary features of mathematics curricula and textbooks and differences in the course contents and the layout.

In addition, I conducted a study of mathematics problem-solving, and investigated and analyzed the relation of problem-solving and cognitive structure and the influence of meta-cognition and solving strategy on problem-solving. Moreover, I studied the differences between characteristics of successful students and those of failing student in terms of problem-solving and learning methods for successful problem-solving. Furthermore, I studied solving strategies and difficulties confronted by students in mathematics problem-solving from the perspective of comparative culture. Mainly, I specifically examine middle school students' problem-solving strategies and difficult points, I investigate and analyze mathematical problem-solving teaching and students' problem-solving behavior from the perspective of a "hidden curriculum" related to students' mathematics learning environment.

It is my honor and challenge to work as a Visiting Professor here. I will take this opportunity to continue my investigation of the research topics described above. I will also start my study of teacher education. I am very pleased to be able to work with you here. Thank you.

New Internal Visiting Professor

Dr. Li Zang Tokai University Junior College

My name is ZANG Li. I have been working at the Center as a Visiting Professor since July of this year. After having taught at a university in China for 11 years, I have been involved in early childhood teacher education in Japan for five years. Working for the Center is a new challenge for me. I appreciate your kindness during my stay.

In recent years, studies of education and teacher education in East Asia are increasingly flourishing in the course of the rise of Asian universities and the emerging of an idea of an East Asian Community. Particularly, educational reform and teacher education reform are being implemented at a dramatic rate in China, where the economy has been growing rapidly. Under what concept, for good or for bad, have the reforms in China been brought about? How do Chinese people perceive and evaluate the reforms? I think that understanding these things can be a stimulus and reference for Japan, where people are influenced similarly by Confucianism and where popular images of education and teachers in the back of their mind are similar. In addition, the need is apparently rising. However, although both Japan and China are located in East Asia, differences exist between the two countries in terms of perceptions and thoughts about education and teacher and ways of thinking about things resulting from situational and living environment differences. For example, their images of teachers are identical with regard to the basic premise: a teacher should

be an "education expert" showing enthusiasm and a sense of mission, specialized knowledge, educational skills, and understanding of children. However, aside from those, there is apparently a tendency: Japan places emphasis on a teacher's "collaborative nature," whereas China attaches weight to a teacher's "quality as an exemplar." These commonalities and differences exist. Therefore, we can view teacher education from both Japanese and Chinese perspectives and review ourselves by stimulating and referring to each other. Furthermore, if we take each other's commonalities and differences as a research perspective, it will be an opportunity for teacher education and studies of teacher education not to be a national challenge but to pose a broader, common challenge for all humanity.

I have spent half of my life in China and the other half in Japan. From now on, using my experience and language abilities, I am going to devote my small strength to education and teacher education in Japan and China and the studies of them, pointing to human commonality to the greatest degree possible.



My Impressions from a Visiting Survey of the Education Bureau of Huanren County, Liaoning Province, China

Kenji Maehara Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University

In late September of this year, as part of our joint research project, we visited the Academy for Research in Teacher Education of Northeast Normal University, and participated in research reporting, consultation conferences, and practice teaching observation. In the first half of the schedule, I took a postgraduate student with me and visited Huanren County, Liaoning Province, which is one of areas for the UGS experiment conducted by Northeast Normal University. We conducted four interview surveys, including one with the Director of the County Education Bureau.

The UGS experiment of Northeast Normal University is an exchange program in which the university, the County Education Bureau (Government), and schools in specific areas mutually cooperate, mainly through teaching practice. Student teachers are scheduled to attend the training camp style practice for about two months.

The straight line distance on the map is approximately 200 km from the university to Huanren County, which we visited. Northeast Normal University is a political, economic, and cultural center in northeastern China and is located in Changchun, the capital of Jilin Province, which is also an important place for various means of transportation. The city has large population and, naturally, numerous schools. Given that fact, why are student teachers sent away to provinces far from there? The university side has difficulty in finding schools to accept teaching practice in a big city like Changchun partly because of the unwillingness of students' parents to participate. Meanwhile, on the acceptance side, there is a sense of welcoming student teachers as a kind of cultural stimulation. In addition, a system exists by which researchers of Northeast Normal University provide menus of in-service teacher training for the UGS experiment areas. They reported that because Northeast Normal University had people involved in curriculum policy at the Chinese national or province levels and leading researchers in the field of lesson study, it was a



Interior view of a high school classroom: More than 50 students study in a classroom, which is the same size as a Japanese classroom. Lessons are conducted at a fast pace, giving one an impression of cramming both qualitatively and quantitatively.

great advantage to receive instruction preferentially from these lecturers.

The Education Bureau of Huanren County is in a complex facility called the Educational Field. In addition to the education bureau, a facility for in-service teacher training (designated as a "teacher training school") and hotel for training participants are arranged on vast grounds (For your information, lodging is free for training participants.). To see the completeness of the facilities, the bustle of the city's main streets, and groups of buildings under construction, the city gave an impression of being like a regional core city in Japan. However, the city was positioned there as "a countryside with brutal traffic." Even TV and the internet have been sufficiently widespread, although a huge disparity remains in terms of the cultural capital environments concentrated on education. We thought that this point—the extent to which we grasp and truly realize the degree of disparity in the cultural capital environments in different regions of vast China—was fundamentally important to understand the significance of the combination of teacher training and in-service teacher training in the UGS experiment areas, as well as broadly understanding education in China.

We plan to undertake a joint research project with the Academy for Research in Teacher Education of Northeast Normal University for a period of about three years. Please contact the Center if you are interested in participating in the project.

Expectations for the Curriculum Center for Teachers

Yozo Takino

Osaka Kyoiku University

Member of the Advisory Board
for the Curriculum Center for Teachers

I devote attention to the following matters with regard to teacher education. (1) Qualitative and quantitative examinations have been required for curriculums in relation to academic achievement. (2) Because of changes to the title of the School Health and Safety Act, school safety, such as disaster prevention education and mental care in schools, must be promoted. (3) Specific countermeasures by teachers are expected for developmental disorders, child abuse, and suicide. (4) Since the Education Personnel Certification Act was revised in 1998, students have come to have more opportunities to receive practical training at educational sites, such as teaching practice and care experience because of cooperation of universities, boards of education, and other bodies and organizations. Consequently, more support for advisers is needed. (5) Ideal means for various training for

teachers, including teaching certificate renewal courses. (6) The use of ICT by and teaching ability of teachers must be improved.

Each problem and challenge is a matter for which early response is expected. We expect the Curriculum Center for Teachers to play a role in leading and supporting teacher training courses at university through active and speedy proposals and consultations.

The Great East Japan Earthquake this time put many schools in a crisis situation. People involved in education are concentrating on early recovery for children to have a safe and secure school life. Under the emergent circumstances, many teachers are additionally deployed to affected areas to carry out emergency response. In Hyogo prefecture, after the Great Hanshin Earthquake, teachers for education restoration, who were in charge of schoolchildren's psychological care and disaster prevention education, had been deployed additionally for 15 years. We also expect the Center to undertake a role as a specialized institution that can archive such experience and learning in a usable form and provide timely support at the time of a crisis, including provision of information according to the needs of each area and implementation of teacher training and consultation.

Sites Where Teachers Are Nurtured

Morio Muramatsu

Principal, Kodaira 14th Elementary School, Tokyo



All teachers in our school open their classrooms to the public and observe each other's classrooms. The challenge has two goals: to enhance their abilities for practicing class lessons and for grasping children's learning status. We believe that enhancing these abilities can lead each of the schoolchildren to acquire "solid academic ability."

We see so-called "jugyo ryoku (teaching ability)" from the following two aspects and take the view that both are supported by the "conditions supporting lesson plan and practice": (1) the "abilities for lesson plan and construction" which are related to planning lessons; and (2) the "abilities for

lesson practice and development" which are associated with practicing lessons. Below is a simple table of the idea.

Abilities for lesson plan and construction

- 1 Clarification of lesson goals
- 2 Creation of evaluation criteria, etc.
- 3 Grasping of learning status
- 4 Understanding of learning content (5-10 omitted)

Abilities for lesson practice and development

- 1 Basic understanding of schoolchildren
- 2 Ways of talking to schoolchildren, etc.
- 3 Basic teaching skills
- 4 Higher level teaching skills
- 5 Flexible teaching

Conditions supporting lesson plan and practice

- 1 Eagerness and enthusiasm for study and training
- 2 Securing time to spend on study and training
- 3 Establishing systems for routine classroom observation and lesson study

Not only the lesson study described above, we plan to implement in the future the "konai ichinichi ryugaku seido (system of one day studying abroad within the school)" routinely. It is a system by which first-year and second-year teachers receive instruction, from morning to the time to go home, from our in-house teachers who have more than 10 years of teaching experience. Teachers should act always keeping in mind an attitude to continue to learn. We address the challenge taking this as the most important point of all.

Terminology of Teacher Education

Professional Development School

The Professional Development School (PDS) is a school established with the aim of professional growth of teachers based on a cooperative system of three parties: university teachers, school teachers, and school administrators who are involved in teacher education. Not only do teachers of PDSs undertake educational practice for schoolchildren and students; they constantly develop teaching professional knowledge through making reflections about their own practices. They are growing as professionals in coming and going between the two.

Advocated in "Tomorrows' Teachers," a report released by the Holmes Group in the United States in 1986, PDSs have been spreading, mainly in the country. However, diverse interpretations of PDS do exist and the real conditions are complicated.

"Teacher Development Schools (TDSs)," which can be designated as an "East Asian version" of PDS, are spreading throughout China partly because of the backing of the Chinese Society of Education. According to Professor Wang Chang Chun (Capital Normal University) who is leading TDSs, the aim here is not merely to cultivate professional competencies, but to develop a "teacher as self" comprehensively. This point attracts attention because it is also related to differences in images of teachers that held in the East and the West. (Yasuyuki Iwata)

Events Calendar

Lecture

18:00-20:30, Friday, February 17, 2012

Lesson Study and Cognitive Psychology

Dr. Naomi Miyake (University of Tokyo)

Lecture

14:30-16:30, Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Mathematics Teacher Training in China

Dr. Shuwen Li (Northeast Normal University)

Lectures are held at the Curriculum Center for Teachers.

Staff of Curriculum Center for Teachers

Director SAKAI, Toshiaki
(Professor, History Education and Korean Education)

Center Researchers
[Division of Curriculum Research and Development]
MITSUSHI, Hatsuo (Professor, Curriculum Studies)
KANEKO, Mariko
(Associate Professor, Educational Sociology)

[Division of Teacher Preparation Research and Development]
IWATA, Yasuyuki
(Associate Professor, Historical Studies of Teacher Education)
UESUGI, Yoshimi
(Associate Professor, Media Education)

[Division of Research and Development for In-Service Teachers]
MAEHARA, Kenji
(Associate Professor, Educational Administration)

The CCT is produced by the Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University.
Editor: Yoshimi Uesugi
Designer: Tsukasa Aoyama and Xiaohui Zhang
(Aoyama Lab., Calligraphy and Arts, Tokyo Gakugei University)

Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University
4-1-1 Nukui-kitamachi Koganei, Tokyo 184-8501 Japan
Tel: 81-42-329-7776 Fax: 81-42-329-7786
E-mail: curricct@u-gakugei.ac.jp
Website: <http://www.u-gakugei.ac.jp/~curricct/english/index.html>