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Going Back to the Root of Learning: Between “Science” and “Social Studies” 2017 CCT Symposium Report



On December 17, 2017 (Sun.), a symposium entitled *Going Back to the Root of Learning: Between “Science” and “Social Studies,”* hosted by the Curriculum Center for Teachers, was held at Tokyo Gakugei University. Social studies and science are grounded in different academic fields of social sciences and natural sciences, respectively, and are often positioned as complementary. However, they have a common aim: to foster competencies in discovering and understanding the state of the world in which we live and to try to become involved in it responsibly. By learning these subjects, what kinds of knowledge and competencies do children obtain to live their own lives?

We invited three speakers from teacher education sites: Shimpei Kobayashi (Associate Professor at Tokyo Gakugei University), who specializes in astrophysics and science education; Toshiki Sakai (Dean of the Department of Education, Kaichi International University and Professor Emeritus at Tokyo Gakugei University), who is a former president of Japanese Association for the Social Studies and a specialist in history education and Korean education; and Eiichiro Harako (Director of the Field Studies Institute for Environmental Education, Tokyo Gakugei University), whose field of specialty is environmental education. After we listened to their address related to the purpose of learning school subjects, we had a discussion crossing the boundaries of fields of study.

Prof. Kobayashi informed the audience that original learning is to know how free we were, dynamically connecting his specialty of physics with our lives. For students studying to be teachers, he sent a message: “I want you to be teachers who can show children how many choices they have, how big the world is, and how free they are. To do that, teachers themselves must be ‘free’ from various constraints. Furthermore, it is the very time when scholarship is needed.”

Prof. Sakai discussed the theme of social “facts”. For example, considering history education, we might have regarded absolute, unwavering “facts” as historical “facts” through examination of historical materials. Sometimes such “facts” would be told as the public common sense. However, social “facts” including history are decided based on the “commonality” and “common consciousness” of many of us. Therefore, they are relative ones. We must remain aware of this. Otherwise, social “facts” are at risk of being distorted by the political and socioeconomic situation of the time.

From the perspective of environmental education, Prof. Harako explored his consideration of learning to “live as a human being” deeply, based on the drama of the trajectory of life and the wishes of Masato Ogata, a fishery worker in the Shiranui Sea, and a patient with Minamata disease. Prof. Harako said that “It is of the utmost importance to know what my true wish is and what I really wish for as a person, as a real human being, tearing off so-called ‘masks’ such as titles and social roles.”

We planned the symposium in expectation of what organic reaction would occur when fellow human beings sharing the challenge of education listened to each talk rooted in their own specialties and crossing the disciplines. I think what is common to the three speakers’ talks were the relations among aspects such as humanity, self, freedom, and learning. Each of us returned to the starting point of learning through a lively question-and-answer session involving the audience. In response to a participant questionnaire, there was an expression that “It was a symposium overturning my unconscious assumptions of which I was not aware. It made me mend my ways.” We would like to thank the three speakers and more than 50 participants, including researchers, teachers, students, and city residents. The symposium proceedings are scheduled to be published in March 2018. (Mariko Kaneko)

Introduction of a New Visiting Associate Professor

Curriculum Center for Teachers welcomes Dr. Jae Park from The Education University of Hong Kong as a Visiting Associate Professor. He will stay from March to August this year. Before his visit to Japan, we asked Dr. Park to contribute an article relating his personal history and research topics.



I am extremely honored to be the 2017-2018 awardee of the Program 'Visiting Professor of Education' for the Curriculum Center for Teachers at the Tokyo Gakugei University. I was introduced to it by Prof. Iwata Yasuyuki, with whom, I often coincide in conferences organized by international comparative education societies. As I will explain later, I am a late comer to academia and my main goal during the Program will be learning from the Curriculum Center for Teachers about Japanese education while pursuing my own scholarship in education studies.

I am a 'Third Culture Person' because I was born in South Korea where I grew up and had basic schooling until I became a teenager. Then, I migrated to Spanish speaking Peru to complete my secondary and tertiary education. I was in my second year of medical studies when a terrorist war broke out between the Peruvian government and 'Maoist' guerilla groups. While this armed conflict was ongoing, I became a medical doctor specializing in pediatric surgery and worked in children's hospitals. Those were the years that I closely witnessed pain, blood and the suffering of young people. I thought that education for them was a right and a noble ideal but they were only theories on paper amidst a huge wave of violence, blackouts and human casualties. Perhaps this is the reason why I became passionate about humanities and social science while watching innocent children suffering the consequences of opposed ideologies and violence as a language and currency. Peru in war and general insecurity was my second culture. I think my doctoral degree in medicine was more experiential than on books—perhaps the program of 'Visiting Professor' at Tokyo Gakugei University will be an occasion to self-reflect further and to share my experiences with local colleagues and students.

I have always been interested in hands-on charity works and social services. Perhaps this is not really my innate character but my response to the surrounding reality—people of my age killing others and training child soldiers. I was spotted by a European Union charity and ended up in my third culture: post-colonial and neo-liberal Hong Kong.

While working in a local educational charity, I perceived another tragedy and suffering of an exam and skill-oriented education. Perhaps triggered by it, I

undertook a Master's course in educational administration and management. It was followed by a doctorate in philosophy of education at The University of Hong Kong. My doctoral thesis topic was on 'leadership of recognition' and supervised by Prof. Colin Evers, who is now at the UNSW, Australia. After the completion of my doctorate, I was hired by my Alma Mater as a Post-doctoral Fellow in 2009. This was my first full-time academic job, yet I viewed it not as a career but a different way of serving society, particularly youth. By then, I was far more critical and less naïve about the dynamics of power, be it subtle as in early education or observed as symbolic violence as in many forms of pedagogy and social institutions, including contemporary neo-liberal higher education as a state apparatus 'in charge' of producing knowledge and manpower.

I am currently an Assistant Professor and the Head of the International Education Research Group in the Centre for Lifelong Learning Research and Development of The Education University of Hong Kong. My primary research interests are the sociology of education, cross-cultural studies and comparative education. Related publications in peer-reviewed international journals are in *Comparative Education Review*, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *Comparative Education*, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* and *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*.

I serve as the Immediate Past-President of The Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong (the largest education research association in Hong Kong) and am the Founding Editor-in-Chief of The International Journal of Comparative Education and Development (Emerald, United Kingdom). I am also an editorial board member of the book series *Educational Leadership Theory* (Springer), as well as a board member of The Routledge Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory and its editor for the 'Peace Education' section.

Another sizable area of my research is the sociological dimension of instructional technology. I have been a co-investigator of Hong Kong government-funded Public Policy Research on the 'Digital Divide' for two consecutive terms of two years each. In this project by a team of researchers, my personal contribution has been to come up with a framework of correlation between 'cultural capital' and parenting/family. We have reported our results in peer-reviewed and well-established journals such as *New Media & Society*, *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher* and *Ethics & Behavior*.

I hope that my stay at the Curriculum Center for Teachers at the Tokyo Gakugei University becomes an opportunity for wide-open exchange of experience and knowledge. I would personally like to grow in my knowledge in the field of Teacher Education. I look forward to receiving inspiration and encouragement from colleagues and students.

Jae PARK

Assistant Professor, The Education University of Hong Kong

“Importance of Sustaining Teachers’ Narratives” : From a lecture by Professor Jean Clandinin

Kenichi Takaira (Tokyo Keizai University)

On October 19, 2017 (Thur.), a lecture meeting with Professor Jean Clandinin, University of Alberta, Canada was held at Iijima 20th Anniversary Alumni Hall, Tokyo Gakugei University. The invitation of Professor Clandinin, who is known as an international standard-bearer for narrative inquiry, was made possible as a project of Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, for which Professor Naomi Katsura at Toyo University serves as the principal investigator. I serve as a co-investigator. At the lecture meeting, “Toward Teacher Education to Sustain ‘Narratives to be a Support’ for Teachers”, the importance of sustaining narratives of each one of new teachers was discussed as follows based on two Canadian studies of teachers’ narratives.

Now teachers’ work worldwide is burdened by stress. In Canada, early turnover of young teachers has become difficulty nationwide. Although the educational administration has devised various measures to retain teachers, they do not help sustain teachers. Through an analysis of narratives of new teachers with two to three years in the teaching profession and those who have been out of the profession for less than five years, results showed that when a teacher’s life as a specialist and life as a person are in a situation of conflict, the teacher feels considerable stress and leaves the profession. The teaching profession is therefore an occupation that is deeply involved in the self of the teacher. What holds the key to improving the quality of teachers’ work is not that their own narratives are impinged or eliminated by their professional life, but that they are deepened by it. To that end, teacher educators must narrate their own selves to teachers-to-be from a training stage and must be given an opportunity to understand themselves much more deeply. On that basis, inquiring narratives to be a support for students (teachers) and reconstructing teacher education as work to create knowledge to be a support is a pressing issue.

Nearly 40 people participated in the lecture meeting from all over Japan. A passionate and convincing talk by Professor Clandinin, perfect translation by Dr. Eriko Yamabe, a lecturer at Tsuru University, and accurate comments by Professor Yoshiya Tanaka at the same university enabled us to learn many things during the lecture meeting. In a question-and-answer session held during the second part, we were able to hear a more specific methodology for narrative inquiry. I would like to extend my deep gratitude to Professor Mariko Kaneko and members at Curriculum Center for Teachers, Tokyo Gakugei University for their efforts at preparation of the lecture meeting.



Terminology of Teacher Education Mentor

The term originated from Mentor, a master who gave guidance to a prince in a Greek myth. Later, it came to carry the implications of “advisor,” “escort runner,” and “supporter” for those who lack experience. At education sites for teachers in Japan, the terms “mentor” and “mentorship” are often used in the context in which teachers with a certain amount of experience are expected to encourage novice teachers professionally.

Under recent circumstances, in which educational issues have diversified and where their handling is left to individual schools, in many cases, support by co-workers with whom concrete educational issues are shared in each school functions more effectively for young teachers rather than what is called “all call training” conducted by local boards of education. It also has an effect that engenders mid-career and veteran teachers’ professional growth through support of young teachers. Given such a background, Yokohama and other cities have undertaken efforts to support training, organizing a young teacher and a mid-career teacher as a mentor team. There is no small number of issues such as relationship building between a mentor and mentee and their respective workloads. Nonetheless, mentoring is increasingly raising expectations in teacher training in Japan. (Yasuyuki Iwata)

Latest publications from the Curriculum Center for Teachers (all in Japanese)

Digital and printed publications

- Record of the 17th Annual Symposium “Active Learning and Teachers’ Capability: Talking on elementary school science” (February, 2017)
- Project Report on Global Dimensions of Initial Teacher Education: Comparative Study of Teacher Preparation for the International Baccalaureate Programme (December, 2016)

Digital publication

- Record of the lecture “Society and Teacher in Taiwan: Its Public Images and Expectations”

Printed publication

- Annual Report of Curriculum Center for Teachers, Vol. 16 (March, 2017)

A list of other publications from the Center is posted on the Japanese version of the website. If you wish our publications to be mailed to you, please contact us at curricit@u-gakugei.ac.jp.

Sites Where Teachers Are Nurtured

Center for Teacher Education and Education Research (ZLSB), Technische Universität Dresden

Rolf Puderbach

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Technische Universität Dresden is one of about 80 full universities in Germany, that are engaged in teacher education. Many actors from all over the university are involved in conducting teacher training degree courses. Currently, about 3,500 students are enrolled in different teacher training courses at TU Dresden. A variety of 24 subjects and 9 vocational subjects can be studied as a part of degree courses for students who want to work in general education schools (primary school, secondary school, and Gymnasium) as well as courses that aim to train teachers for vocational schools. Teacher training courses are carried out mainly by six different faculties. Indirectly, nearly all of the 14 faculties are involved in teacher education.

To coordinate the activities that are performed by these faculties, the Center for Teacher Education and Education Research (ZLSB) was founded in 2005. Since then ZLSB has become an important player in organisation and administration of degree courses, quality assurance, development of curricula and study programmes, advanced teacher training, educational research, and other areas.

The ZLSB is managed by a board under participation of the most relevant faculties and status groups. A large number of work groups provides the framework for an intense exchange and cooperation of university members, second stage representatives of teacher training (which is run by state institutions), and the educational authorities. Students are also represented.

A very essential component of ZLSB is the Academic Affairs Office for Teacher training. Here, teacher students will find all contact persons for

student affairs: the examination office, counselling services, coordination of school internships etc.

Being an interdisciplinary institution, the ZLSB coordinates research and development projects in teacher training. Its own research mainly deals with arising questions in the context of teacher training courses and teacher training research (empirical surveys on students' choice of degree courses, study behaviour, study termination, skill-building development throughout one's studies, lateral entry into the teaching profession).

Besides many other tasks and challenges, the ZLSB is engaged in the cooperative project "Synergetic Teacher Training" (TUD-Sylber). This project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research as a part of a nation-wide quality improvement campaign named Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung (Teacher Training Quality Campaign). TUD-Sylber contains of 16 sub-projects, that are located in all teacher training faculties. The Project management and coordination are established at the ZLSB.

The sub-projects are working on three main tasks: First focal point is organisational development in university's teacher training structures. That includes to set up a graduate forum for young investigators in educational sciences and subject didactics as well as a centralised Academic Affairs Office for all teacher students. Additionally, the project aims at establishing institutions in which intensified communication, networking and collaboration of the numerous involved players in teacher training take place.

Second focal point of TUD-Sylber is a sustainable quality improvement in teacher training courses. Researchers and lecturers develop new teaching formats, i.e. with the use of classroom videos. Others are working on the integration of relevant new issues in the teacher training curricula, such as inclusive education or teaching in multi-grade classes.

Third focal point is regional networking. Against the background of a critical demographic development in rural areas in the federal state of Saxony, a closer cooperation of TU Dresden with schools, municipalities, cultural institutions and others is needed to ensure a well working educational system in these regions.

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