

FUNDAMENTAL SCHOOL REFORM THROUGH LESSON STUDY FOR LEARNING COMMUNITY (LSLC): A STUDY OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING IN INDONESIA AND JAPAN

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Abstract

Learning community in primary schools becomes the basis of developing the quality of education since in the early ages of the students. Learning community is the community of learning among students, among teachers, both students and teachers which learn collaboratively in the process of learning. It leads to the strengthening of the character values of the students because it creates community of learning. Basically in learning community, there is no rivalry in learning and no competition among the students but they are collaboratively learning and caring to each other instead. There are 3 basic principals of learning community: 1) *the right to learn*, where every student has special uniqueness and potential and the teachers should give opportunities for each student to learn; 2) *teachers do not teach but they make the students learn*; 3) *education is for public*, the class should be opened for public to observe. Those three basic principles become the basis in conducting school reform. School reform here means how schools build *learning community* where students and teachers learn to each other to create *quality education*, *equality*, and *social harmony* through *open class* based on collaborative learning. Japan has progressively implemented LSLC for several decades, especially in some areas like in Fujikawa, Yoshiwara, Shimone Ushiku, and currently in Agarie, Yagachi, Sate Kunigami, Nago. While in Indonesia, it is currently occupied in schools such as in Pasuruan, Halmahera, and Bantul.

Key words: School Reform, Collaborative Learning

Introduction

Lesson Study for Learning Community in Schools

Realizing a quality education in Indonesia and in Japan is the main goal of school reform execution. One of them is by implementing Lesson Study for Learning Community (LSLC). LSLC is a Lesson Study which includes *plan*, *do*, and *see* based on collaborative learning implemented through Open Class to create a Learning Community. Basically, Lesson Study is a learning activity that begins with a "Plan" by the teacher then followed by the implementation of learning process "Do" in the Open class where students' learning activities which are based on collaborative learning are directly observed by the principal, peer-teachers, supervisors, advisors from college, even students' parents, etc. The one becoming the focus of observation is how students learn rather than how teachers teach. After that, all of them analyze the results of these observations in detail in a reflection forum for the purpose of mutual learning and improving the quality of student learning.

In LSLC, the learning is oriented to form a Learning Community among schools, teachers, parents, and students. Besides, the system is also oriented to be able to create Caring Community in Collaborative Learning between teachers and students, among teachers, and among students because, in a collaborative learning, there is no competition or rivalry among the students but mutual learning. LSLC basic principle is "Guaranteeing Rights of Learning for Every Child" where each child has his/her own specialty, uniqueness, and potential; this is in line with the

assessment system in 2013 Indonesian curriculum that uses Authentic Assessment. In addition, another basic principle, "Teachers do not teach but teachers learn", at a glance seems simple enough but the principle has a very deep philosophical meaning. This is the one which is consistently done with a high commitment by education system in Japan packed in the spirit of School Reform.

School Reform in question refers to how the school is able to realize a learning community where teachers and students, even parents and society learn from each other as what has been implemented in Japan on an ongoing basis. Such best practice is based on the interpretation that schools as a learning community is a vision, philosophy, and activity system, that school is a place where children learn together, teacher also learn together as teaching professional, and even parents learn together through active participation (Prof. Manabu Sato). "The teacher does not teach but learn" is the basic philosophy of the learning community. In addition, every child has the right to learn that the Japanese government guarantees the right of every student to learn. Then, based on that philosophy also, it can create a joyful and meaningful learning in each child, each of whom has the right to learn.

Real and basic activities that must be implemented in a learning community is implementing an open class, teaching by designing the lesson plan first, implementing the learning process openly by being observed by other teachers, lecturers/experts from universities, and also the students' parents, then the results of these observations are used as a material to reflect how

the students learn and not to reflect how the teachers teach. Thus, the reflection forum is not used to criticize teachers but to analyze in detail each phenomenon or fact related to students activities in the learning process. In a learning community, teachers also learn from each other, especially between principals and teacher and also among teachers which then may form a cultural collegiality. The principle of collegiality and equality

exist because teachers help each other, no teacher 'rockets' himself/herself and also no teacher is 'left behind'. It also happens to students where there is no competition between them. They only perform collaborative learning where students who have more ability help the less able ones to create an atmosphere of mutual learning.

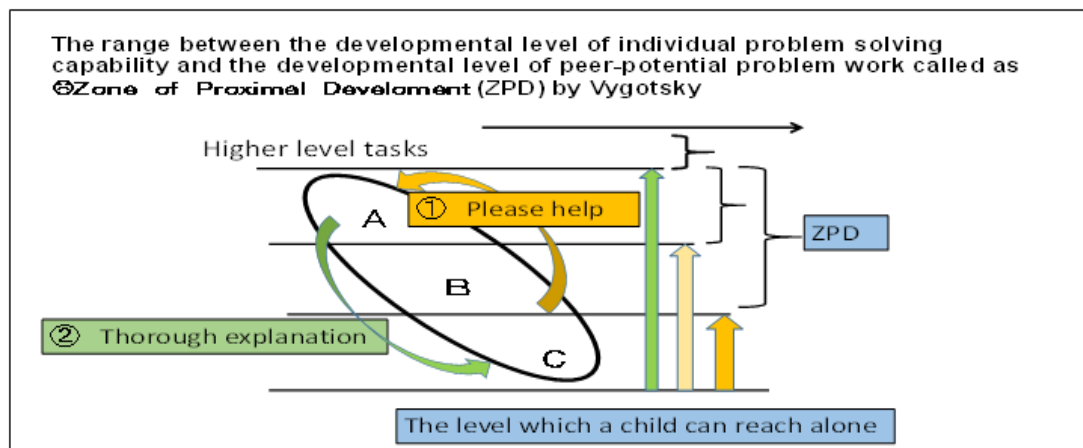


Figure 1. The Concept of ZPD Vygotsky (adopted from Masaaki Sato 2014)

No student "rockets" himself/herself alone and no student is "left behind" and eventually it may develop a Caring Community. The practice of collaborative learning based on the caring community is effectively able to establish social harmony.

Fundamental School Reform

School reform through Learning Community is the realization of the 21st century educational paradigm. The concept of 21st century education is debated among the countries of the world against the backdrop of globalization after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. After that, the term 'modern school' emerged because of two main motives, the nation-state and industrial society. Then, globalization that emerged from the collapse of the cold war structure has weakened the second motif foundation. Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, 21st century educational paradigm continues to evolve and becomes a new foundation of every country in the world, both developing countries and developed countries in North America, Europe, and even Asia.

Referring to the data of educational development of the developed countries belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Manabu SATO (2012: 5) states that there are four characteristics of 21st century educational paradigm: knowledge-based society, multicultural society, the risk of disparity society, mature civil society: a) Knowledge-based society: Developed countries are experiencing a transformation from an industrial society towards a post-industrial society where there is a dramatic

transformation of labor market population in the field of information science and interpersonal services (welfare, health, education, culture, etc.). Along with the development of science, schooling education as the basis of learning is required to foster communication, interaction, and collaboration through creative thinking and exploration that is driven by the need to educate the learners for lifelong learning; b) Multicultural society: Due to the influence of globalization, people all around the world move and pass the state boundaries which then they form a multicultural society and it will even continue growing rapidly along with the development of science and technology; c) Risk of disparity society: In addition to forming a multicultural society, globalization also causes individual inclusion or exclusion. For example, in a democratic and political society, there are some barriers, like political parties, groups, and specific interests such as social strata and power, and even there is a marginalized class which proves that maturity, in terms of self's existence, greatly affects people to socialize in the community; d) Mature civil society: Decentralization and deregulation as a result of globalization in every country makes the protective layer of nationalism and humanism value thinning and civil society increasingly exposed to democratic populism crisis, public morals decline, lawsuits and conflicts of interest based on egoism and individualism rising causing the increase of burden and mental illness. Of these situations, the 21st century educational paradigm emerged and built by two basic principles of "quality" and "equality". Those basic principles are clearly illustrated in some surveys of international academic

skills such as PISA and OECD since 2000 which show the educational success of some countries such as Finland, Canada, Australia, Japan, and South Korea.

The paradigm of education and schooling slowly performs a historical changing with its own background and characteristics. Changes of School Reform in the 21st century educational paradigm include 3 things: a) First, the curriculum shifted from the "model program" to "project model". Model program is described as a form of learning design that is described as the prototype of assembly line in the production system where the curriculum is formed as climbing the stairs one by one and each of its parts is arranged based on the activity unit, 'goal-achievement-evaluation'. While in the project model, the learning is designed based on the unit of learning subjects, 'subjects-exploration-expression', which is described as climbing a mountain where there is a climbing lane in learning and the learning subjects obtain a meaningful learning experience. In other words, the model program focuses on the 'purpose' or 'outcomes' while project model pursue 'meaning' of the learning experience; b) Secondly, there is a transformation from 'conventional' learning to 'collaborative' one. Hallmark of the conventional learning is that all students face the board, listen to the teacher's explanation, where lecturing dominates and teacher centered condition occurs there, then students write back what is on the blackboard into a notebook. It is far different from collaborative learning where the learning activities of elementary school students of grade 1-3, who became the model of collaborative learning, involve whole class and pair activities. Then, for students of elementary school grade 4-6, junior high school grade 7-9, and also high school, the model applied was mixed-cross-group collaborative learning consisting of four students, two female students and two male students. Based on the research by Manabu SATO from twenty countries in over 300 schools over 25 years, the school reform began from Canada in the 1980s, spread out to America in the 1990s then to Europe and to Asia in the 2000s; c) Third, the last change is in terms of school functions. The growth of decentralization since the 90s demands for school autonomy and school functions as the center education and culture in the local community. Simultaneous achievement of quality and equality encourages the development of teachers' professional skills and the school should be a place for teachers to develop their professional abilities (professional learning community) and to play the role as the cultural center of the local community.

Discussion

Indonesian practices of LSLC

In order to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the government continues to work on improving the quality of learning including

developing curriculum and increasing the number of educators as a form of school reform which will be pursued on an ongoing basis. In terms of improving the quality of learning, the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture uses Curriculum 2013 starting in 2013. Meanwhile, in terms of resource educators, government through the Directorate of Teachers and Education Personnel provides skill reinforcement to develop and implement the policies aimed at improving the quality of education. Many activities have been and are being implemented in support of these efforts. One of them is the Collaborative International Training on Lesson Study for Learning Community (LSLC) in Indonesia and Japan. This scientific activity was held in cooperation between the Directorate of Education Personnel with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). School Reform implementation becomes an important agenda for the two countries to improve the quality of learning in schools and it is done through Lesson Study for Learning Community in schools. In contrast to the implementation LSLC in Japan that have been implemented over decades and even centuries and have proven effective in improving the quality of learning in there, LSLC implementation in Indonesia is relatively new and it developed in a top-down way.

Historically, the implementation begins by the program of IMSTEP (teaching development project for primary and secondary education in 1998-2003), SYSTEMS (Program of teacher training empowerment in 2006-2008), and PELITA (school improvement program in 2009-2013) and planned to be continued in subsequent years and will continue to be pursued by the government, particularly through the implementation of curriculum 2013. Cooperation with educational experts in Japan is intended to improve the quality of education and educators through the implementation of LSLC. Then, for the level of secondary school, the lesson study is carried through LSBS system, especially in Subject Teacher Association or *MGMP* where the program of Quality Improvement (Pelita) in 2009-2013 was conducted in Minahasa, Pasuruan, Banjarbaru, and Bantul regency. LSLC in question is the Lesson Study which includes Plan, Do, and See based on Collaborative Learning implemented through Open Class to create a Learning Community and Caring Community with hopes of creating social harmony. Open class in question refers to how the teaching and learning process in the classroom were opened to the observers (principals, peer-teachers, students' parents, school supervisor, people from college, government, society, and other educational fields) that can observe how students learn.

Here is an example of LSLC implementation in Bantul Indonesian:

Plan (designing the learning process)



Figure 2. The process of designing learning (Plan) in the implementation of LSLC in SMPN Pandak Bantul Indonesia

Do (implementing the learning process in the Open Class)



Figure 3. The process of implementing open learning class (Do) in the implementation of LSLC in Indonesia

See (The process of reflecting the observation results of how students learn)



Figure 4. The process of reflection (See) in the implementation of LSLC in SMP Pandak Bantul Indonesia

Japanese practices

In the practical level of learning implementation in Japan, the government, in this case is the Ministry of Education, authorizes any Board of Education (BoE) and the schools to perform and develop creative ideas. In other words, education in Japan is implemented using a bottom-up system, where creativity, as the basis for the development of schools and school reform, emerged from the bottom. The BoE with schools innovate then the government support in accordance with the school potential. There is a general innovation

which covers a wide area of the region such as the implementation of Lesson Study based on Collaborative Learning because almost all prefectures apply the learning system. In general, there is also a shared vision on how to teach students using student center approach with mixed-cross-group system consisting of four students, two male and two female students in each group. In addition, the seating is formed in U pattern where one-third of students look toward the right side, one third of them look toward the left one, and one-third face the board.



Figure 5. The seating pattern in SMPN Shimone Japan

Besides, the chairs and tables for student are also standardized nationally. They are made of good quality materials, so lightweight that easily moved especially in forming a group for one student has one chair and one table. In addition, they also can be used multifunction to protect students when an earthquake happened. There are also innovations that are specific or simply carried by the BoE of a particular City or by certain schools. For example, schools in Fuji City, like State Junior High School of Fujikawa and Yoshiwara, apply the philosophy of Mount Fuji. The school and the teachers asked all children to learn as climbing to the top of a mountain. It can be guessed that not all of them can reach the peak. Therefore, children who seemed to reach the peak should back down to the other students to help their friends who have difficulties in learning. Another example is available in Shimone Ushiku Junior High School which apply a pattern of effective communication with students where teachers use very low sounds/low volume. However, even by only using a very soft voice, the students seek to listen to develop a very effective communication. There are also schools requiring teachers' commitment on approaching the students who ask to crouch so that the head of teachers is equal or in the lower position to the head of the students. At a first glance, it seems unique but the school creativity has been proved to be capable of

realizing the school culture reflecting a place of learning that make up social harmony. Another experience was found in Okinawa prefecture, at Agarie school in Nago City. LSLC is relatively new to be applied in this area compared to some areas in Japan. BoA of Nago City raised an advisor in executing school reform through LSLC. Other than that, there is 'one roof' policy where the elementary and junior high school are built in the same area at one complex for the purpose of similarizing the vision and mission between the two school levels in implementing LSLC.

Still in Okinawa prefecture, especially in the area of Kunigami, BoA Kunigami implements the system of cross schools where teachers in a particular school teach in other schools also. So do the students where they can also learn from other students. In fact, there are students of different classes who learn in one same space. This is done so because in Kunigami area, including Nago area, the number of school-age children is quite a bit.

Here are some sample images of LSLC implementation in some schools in some areas in Japan such as in the Fujikawa school and Yoshiwara school in Fuji City, Shimone Ushiku school, Hamanago school, Agarie school and Yagachi school in Nago, Okinawa, and Sate school in Kunigami, Okinawa:

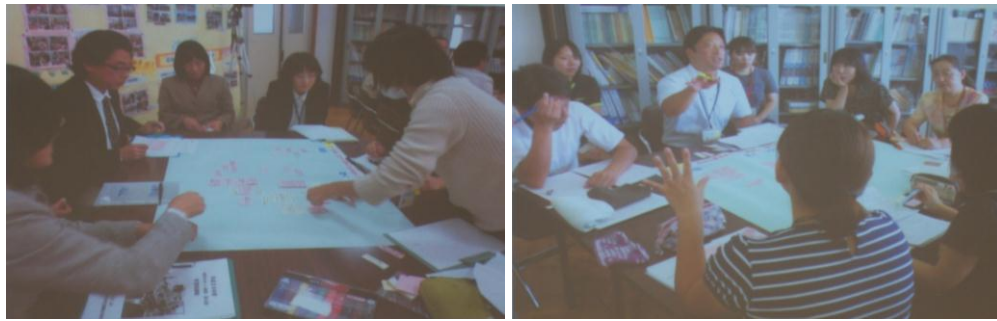
PlanFigure 6. The process of executing *Plan* in LSLC implementation in Japan*Do*Figure 7. The process of conducting open learning class (*Do*) in LSLC implementation in Japan*See*



Figure 8. The process of reflection (*See*) in LSLC implementation in Japan

In general, it can be concluded that schools in Japan implements several educational philosophies which were initiated by the leaders of education in Indonesia, such as '*ing ngarsa sung tuladha, ing madya mangu karsa, tut wuri handayani*', a philosophy of *gotong-royong* (mutual hone) and *asah, asih, asuh* (teach, love, care). Furthermore, schools in Japan do not explicitly teach/develop character building but students here practice the values of good characters such as hard work, discipline, being clean, friendly and respectful even

to guests or people they do not know, being honest and responsible, and also bringing positive attitudes to others. In addition, in some schools there was an interesting moment like the one happened in Shimone Junior High School where students will not come home before the classes and the school environment are clean. So, they mopped all the floors of the school, a phenomenon which may be rare to be seen in some countries, as shown in the following pictures:



Figure 9. The Practice of character values by students in Japan

Social Harmony in LSLC

In other words, Lesson Study for Learning Community (LSLC) is a form of concrete ways to reform schools, especially in Japan and began to be implemented in Indonesia. In principle, the implementation of LSLC is intended to build Social

Harmony. Social harmony is formed of several pillars of learning community that is manifested in students' learning activities based on collaborative learning and caring community. It can be seen in the following pictures:





Figure 10. Student learning activities in Collaborative Learning in Japan

Social harmony in learning community also includes creativity in terms of how teachers use a very slow volume of voice then the students will seriously try to listen to them. In addition, the

teachers' strategy to approach students by bending their heads to be in the same or lower position than the students' head is capable of improving students' confidence in learning.



Figure 11. The way teacher approach students in the group in Japan

School reform to build social harmony is implemented based on three philosophies: Public philosophy, Democracy philosophy, Excellency philosophy. Here are the description of those three philosophies:

Public philosophy, schools belong to the public, then the schools should be open. The first step of school reform is that school should provide open classrooms to be seen, to be by the principal, other teachers, supervisors, parents, universities, etc. If there is one teacher in the school, still, close the class, school reform is impossible to happen in the school. No matter how great is the teachers in their teaching practice, if they do not want to open the class to their colleagues, at least once a year, then they can not be recognized as a public school teacher because they have made the students, the class, the school, and their teaching practice as their private property. To make the school become public belonging, it is necessary to open a class, at least once a year, and to build mutual learning among teachers.

a) *Democracy philosophy*, there is no place which is more important to emphasize democracy but school. However, there is no other place as well, except school, which does not run a democracy. Democracy in question is not the vote majority but it is the one proposed by John Dewey where democracy is a way of associated living. Manabu SATO research results in a school with 350 students sought data on how many students becomes the topic of discussion in teachers'

room, at least once, in a year. The number of students whose names are discussed in the staff room no more than 10%. They are troubled students, students with low academic ability, students with very high academic potential, and students who are active in extracurricular activities. From these data, is it appropriate to say that such school is a democratic school? It is totally no. Schools that do not talk about their students, without exception, cannot be called as a democratic school.

Even within groups of teachers, democracy is ignored. School where the same people always talk in teacher meetings, school whose manager executes programs based on the idea of influential teachers, and school with many teachers never speak is not a democratic school. Teachers who always 'talk much' are not superior education practitioners. Superior teachers are those who are quiet and unpretentious. Calm teachers do their jobs calmly, change their school with their 'soft voice' management, develop schools and enable the realization of high-quality education. If school is not a place where each student, teacher, principal, and parent is the main character (protagonist) to work together, then the school reform will not succeed.

To realize democracy in schools and in classrooms, 'mutual listening' among students, between students and teachers, and among teachers should exist. Although there is no place

other than school to articulate the importance of 'dialogue', there are only a few schools that truly embody the dialogue. Opinions of teachers in teachers' meeting should not be a monologue, including the interaction of students in the class. With 'mutual listening,' we are ready for dialogical communication that allows the creation of a learning community.

- b) *Excellence philosophy*, without efforts to achieve excellence, learning will not show good results. Excellence in question does not mean superior to others. It means doing the best suited to the existing conditions. If not chasing the best in instructional practice, the better learning will never realize. The level of learning quality cannot be lowered solely due to the low students' ability or the uncondusive environment. It does so for the teachers. The level of teaching quality cannot be lowered just because the teacher are not feeling well or being too busy. In any circumstances, teachers need to get used to pursue maximum learning. The notion delivered by John Dewey, 'education is a process of habit formation', needs to be supported by excellence philosophy.

Conclusion

The practices of LSLC implementation holds the school principle that class is for public so that classes should be open in which the democracy of learning: child, teacher, and parent are all "protagonist" as reaffirmed that democracy of learning is "a way of associated living" and respect for the dignity and diversity of individuals (John Dewey). This learning perspective is better known as the philosophy of excellence in which each person does best. Starting from the best practice, it is time for education to rise. Of course, to realize it,

the support and involvement of all the parties that are directly or indirectly related to education are needed so that the ideals to build a quality education, equality, and social harmony as an educational paradigm of the 21st century can be realized.

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