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Lesson Study in Japan

Abstracts

EN

This article introduces Lesson Study in Japan as a developmental qualitative research methodology on teaching. Lesson Study is a research framework in which researchers and teachers are tied closely to encourage teachers developing their teaching skills with enhanced pedagogical insights by collaborating with multiple stakeholders, such as colleagues in a school, the board of education, or researchers at a university. It seeks both professional development of teachers and scientific research on education in the first place. This article firstly describes the tradition of Lesson Study and discusses how this approach could provide a unique insight to qualitative teaching research. After introducing the general background of Lesson Study in Japan, the concept and the procedure of collaborative Lesson Study at Hiroshima University is articulated. The last part will present an example of Lesson Study. The conclusion proposes a way of mediating research and development by reflecting on the relevance of normativity.

DE

In diesem Artikel wird die Lesson Study in Japan als Methode der qualitativen Unterrichtsentwicklung vorgestellt. Lesson Study ist ein Forschungsrahmen, in dem Forscher:innen und Lehrpersonen eng zusammenarbeiten, um Lehrpersonen zu ermutigen, ihre Unterrichtskompetenzen mit verbesserten pädagogischen Erkenntnissen zu entwickeln, indem sie mit verschiedenen Interessengruppen wie Kolleg:innen in einer Schule, der Schulbehörde oder Forscher:innen an einer Universität kooperieren. Dabei geht es in erster Linie um die berufliche Entwicklung von Lehrpersonen und die wissenschaftliche Erforschung von Bildung. In diesem Artikel wird zunächst die Tradition der Lesson Study beschrieben und erörtert, wie dieser Ansatz einen einzigartigen Einblick für eine qualitative Unterrichtsforschung bieten könnte. Nach einer Einführung in den allgemeinen Hintergrund der Lesson Study in Japan werden Konzept und Ablauf der kollaborativen Lesson Study an der Universität Hiroshima erläutert. Im letzten Teil wird ein Beispiel für Lesson

Study vorgestellt. In der Schlussfolgerung wird ein Weg zur Vermittlung von Forschung und Entwicklung vorgeschlagen, indem die Bedeutung der Normativität reflektiert wird.

PT

Este artigo apresenta o Lesson Study no Japão como uma metodologia de investigação qualitativa de desenvolvimento do ensino. O Lesson Study é um quadro de investigação em que investigadores e professores estão interligados para encorajar os professores a desenvolverem as suas competências de ensino com conhecimentos pedagógicos aprofundados, colaborando com várias partes interessadas, como os colegas de uma escola, o conselho de educação ou os investigadores de uma universidade. O objetivo é, em primeiro lugar, o desenvolvimento profissional dos professores e a investigação científica no domínio da educação. Este artigo começa por descrever a tradição do Lesson Study e discute a forma como esta abordagem pode proporcionar uma perspectiva única à investigação qualitativa do ensino. Depois de apresentar o contexto geral do Lesson Study no Japão, é articulado o conceito e o procedimento do Lesson Study colaborativo na Universidade de Hiroshima. A última parte apresenta um exemplo de Lesson Study. A conclusão propõe uma forma de mediar a investigação e o desenvolvimento através da reflexão sobre a relevância da normatividade.

JA

本稿では、開発的な教育研究の方法論としての日本の授業研究を紹介する。授業研究は、研究者と教師が密接に結びつき、教師が、同僚、教育委員会、大学の研究者といった多種多様のステークホルダーと共同し、その過程の中で教育学的知見を深めることによって、教授技術や教育観を向上・深化させる研究フレームワークである。これは教師の専門職開発と科学的な教育研究を両立させようとするアプローチである。以下でははじめに授業研究の歴史を紹介し、このアプローチが質的教育研究に対してどのような特質ある知見をもたらしているかについて論じる。次に、日本の授業研究の全体的な背景を説明し、広島大学での協働的な授業研究のコンセプトと進め方を紹介する。さらに、授業研究の事例を紹介する。結論では研究と開発をどのように結び付けようかについて、規範性を省察することの重要性という観点から検討する。

1 Introduction – Lesson Study as a form of qualitative educational research in Japan

“Stay between a dictionary and a tape recorder” Every educational research school in every country, more or less, possesses certain kinds of normative key phrases that shape its research orientation. Qualitative educational research in Japan, exceptions aside, with its varied forms of research interests and orientations, is oriented towards forming a strong connection between theoretical research and practical development. From this normative expectation, it was stated that a researcher should hold a dictionary in his right hand and a tape recorder in his left hand, and that he should dedicate his theoretical work on the dictionary to practical development and vice versa. To repeat a familiar phrase, the history of qualitative research in Japan is the history of the unceasing pursuit for theory-practice relationship.

“Lesson Study” is a research framework that ties researchers and teachers closely to encourage teachers developing their teaching skills with enhanced pedagogical insights by collaborating with multiple stakeholders, such as colleagues in a school, the board of education, or researchers at a university (for a broad viewpoint, see NASEM 2011). It has played the central role in historical contexts of qualitative educational research in Japan and continues to do so. It may be argued that Lesson Study offers a place where teaching practice is subjected to sophisticated reflection by theoretical pedagogical insights; simultaneously, the theory gains theoretical nutrition for further development by practice. Currently, Lesson Study is a trend worldwide, implemented in North America, Asia, Europe, and Africa for teacher in-service training, initial teacher training, and teacher education in university comprising many different variations of application from subject-based research to psychological and sociological methodologies.

In this article, Japanese scholars from Hiroshima University will describe Lesson Studies by taking a macro glance at the upheaval and worldwide expansion of Lesson Studies and a micro glance at the position and uniqueness of Lesson Study at Hiroshima University. After introducing the general background of Lesson Study in Japan, in which teacher (pre-service and in-service) education will be the focus, the concept and the procedure of collaborative Lesson Study at Hiroshima University will be articulated. The last part will present an example of Lesson Study. The conclusion will propose a way of mediating research and development by reflecting on the relevance of normativity.

2 Lesson Study in Japan – Jugyou Kenyuu for teacher training

2.1 The History of Lesson Study: Democracy and Science

Lesson study in Japan has its roots in the Meiji era (1868-1912), the time of radical modernisation of all social systems including school education. Immediately after the establishment of the western school system in Japan, teachers were assigned to develop their skills to teach as a part of their professionalism; however, Lesson Study in the Meiji era was merely a part of the assignment and was not perceived as a significant movement like the grassroots Lesson Study in the post-war period. Although the upheaval of *Lesson Study* in the movement of new education during the Taisho era (1913-1925) could also be observed, literatures share a common understanding that the movement of Lesson Study/Studies arose in the post-World War II era (1945-1960s), the time of the thorough reflection on suppressive governmental power on school education in the pre-war period. The pursuit for liberal democracy in school and in the society was realised in the form of grassroots educational research, Lesson Study, and belief in science that should have overcome the arbitrary politics (cf. Fukazawa et al. 2020).

The nature of the centralisation in the national curriculum had not changed at all even after experiencing totalitarian militarism. Resistance against the central government and a call for the autonomy of teaching practice in school education were nurtured within the circles of grassroots educational research. In the 1950s, several prominent research groups were established, such as the Society for Achieving the Original Spirit of Social Studies, the Association of Mathematical Instruction, the History Educationalist Conference of Japan, the Association of Scientific Research for Education, and the Japanese Society for Life Guidance Studies (see NASEM 2011).

These groups shared a common aim to realise a democratic society by educating children. As reflected clearly in group names, these grassroots educational research groups contribute to a subject along with the course of study: Social Studies, Mathematics, History, Science, and so on. It implies that those grassroots level educational research groups remained in an ambivalent position because their legitimacy came from the national curriculum, even though they cherished their aim to achieve a democratic society against governmental entity; while idealistic discussions for democracy against the government could characterise a generative process of those educational research groups, in reality, school teachers had to teach subjects that were determined by government and struggled with teaching these subjects. Consequently, the need for well-structured and effective general methodologies

for subjects arose from teachers, and educational research groups responded to such calls from teachers and provided them with an arena for the deepening of insights, holding experimental lessons with discussions, and developing skills and strategies, which resulted in the birth of an arena where research on and development of lessons were simultaneously and reciprocally combined with each other (cf. Fukazawa et al. 2019).

Lesson Study did not stay merely within the teachers but was open to university researchers who also breathed the breath of democracy. Researchers stood on the threshold of Lesson Study, the collaborative educational research with schoolteachers in the early 1960s. Specifically, it is worth noting that five major research universities, Hokkaido University, the University of Tokyo, Nagoya University, Kobe University, and Hiroshima University, were summoned to hold the series of Lesson Study to discuss a lesson from multiple perspectives (cf. Kiper & Yoshida. 2016, pp.47-57).

2.2 Attributes of Lesson Study as a new way of defining educational research and teaching profession

Lesson Study is now expanding its effectiveness throughout the world. Already in the 1990s, Makoto Yoshida introduced Lesson Study to the United States (Yoshida 1999). In addition, the video survey held by Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) became the turning point that made Lesson Study well known to a much wider population. After widely spreading in Asia and North America, Lesson Study expanded to Europe and Africa. Lesson Study became a matter of academic association in 2006, established by the World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS). A glimpse into the discussion of the articles by WALS reveals the tendency of Lesson Study becoming a global phenomenon as well; Lesson Study in the international landscape is primarily the matter of teacher (in-service and pre-service) education in collaboration with the researchers' commitment. Beyond the boundary of culture, there would be valuable notions retrieved from Lesson Study which might propose new insights on qualitative educational research. Of those variously articulated notions on Lesson Study, the following three points will describe the significance.

First, Lesson Study has been proposing a new shape of educational research, that is, educational research without any trivialisation and reduction would welcome a new research stakeholder, the teacher, into its research activity. It implies that the theory of construction and practice development is understood as a single united process as a way of offering the teacher and researcher an experimental place by inviting researchers and practitioners to observe "*what's going on*" in the classroom.

Sociologically disciplined researchers are fanatically faithful to the premise that researchers must not contaminate the object to be observed because distance must be maintained from the object so that they could observe “*what’s going on*” in the respective social space. This is why current research frameworks prefer only to place a video camera at the front and rear side of classroom, with the researcher dashing out of the classroom and observing the lesson through the lens. Moreover, researchers prefer not to talk much with the teacher and exclude the practitioner from the discussions after the practice to dissect the practice. Despite some exceptional methodologies, such as participatory observation, sociologically influenced qualitative educational research somehow remains separate from the practice.

Lesson Study proposes an alternative method of conducting qualitative educational research. Qualitative research deals with the latent and apparent quality that might work in the targeted phenomenon, which does not necessarily exclude the participant in this phenomenon from analysis. On the contrary, since the teacher as the very central presence in the educational phenomenon of the classroom would possess his/her own willingness, strategies, or mental constitution that let him/her behave in a particular manner, qualitative educational research by rational choice seeks a crucial data resource about the subject’s mental movement and transformation. In other words, Lesson Study as a form of qualitative educational research would never ignore the subjective intention and strategies behind the apparent behaviour, as long as it wants to do the *research on education*. It is because education is not separate from the internal cognitive process through the interaction between teaching and learning. As explained in Hiroshima group’s assumption in the next section, an educative process arises when two different processes of teaching and learning interlock together: the teacher’s intention and approach to students may not suffice the condition of education if the students’ learning process is somehow initiated, while focus on the students’ learning process is not the sufficient condition for the educative process because teaching actions by others may be absent in the learning process. When we talk about the educative process, one cannot overlook this interaction or interlock of these two independent internal processes. The emphatic expression on “research on education” has its legitimization because many qualitative educational researches reveal not the educative insights but merely a social structure, such as power relation and social modes of interaction, which has been heard for the umpteenth time and that is truly less related to the educative process.

Qualitative educational research in Lesson Study starts from extracting the teacher’s intention and willingness of the action he/she wanted to take in the classroom. Phenomenological methodologies have, therefore, an affinity for Lesson Study. Some didactical analyses such as content analysis, critical

review on textbooks, categorisation of teaching-learning interaction, and the segmentation of the sequence of lessons are also common methodologies for Lesson Study. Psychological or sociological analysis could also be integrated. Researchers in universities invented methodologies for making transcripts, gleaming unique perspectives, and archiving lesson data. All processes of analysis based on those methodologies are associated with teachers.

Second, along with the first point, Lesson Study proposes a new shape of professionalism of the teacher as a researcher (cf. Hall 2014). To elucidate this significance, it might be worth briefly mentioning the current discussion in the realm of teacher education. “Reflective practitioner”, proposed by D. Schön, seems the dominant figure of the professionalism for teachers. It is quite accurate that a teacher as a “reflective practitioner” always ponders upon his/her own practice in the middle of practice; however, it is quite inaccurate that teachers are now placed ceaselessly into the heavily overwhelming reflection. No one denies the significance of reflection that would prevent the teaching practitioner from staying selfish and unenlightened; however, such figures lose their connection to the pedagogical and educational scientific orders. It seems quite a natural counter punch that Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) then comes to the forefront.

The figure of a teacher in the tradition of Lesson Study holds a different assumption that a teacher is by nature a researcher on education who, within his/her own field, examines a unique phenomenon in lessons and classrooms. A Lesson Study practitioner neither overestimates nor underestimates the importance of reflection, but properly positions reflection into the cycle of collaborative Lesson Study to prevent the reflective process from staying inside the personal judgement separated from other viewpoints. Overcoming the dichotomy of reflection and content, there has been a well-known analogue, which would imply that the theory construction and practice development are always combined in a single process in which both aspects of research and development reside.

In addition, it should also be mentioned that Lesson Study in Japan has not weighed the solo-independent judgement within each single teacher but emphasises so-to-say intersubjective and cooperative processes. Professionals, as strong, independent, self-judging people, have no reason to authorise themselves in Lesson Study. No one could claim that a teacher must educate children alone and must assume total responsibility. Rather, educating children is by nature a social phenomenon in which children are nurtured and cared for by various multiple characters. Norms in Lesson Study advocating that teachers should not occupy the whole world for a child but let the child be open to other personalities suggests inversely that a teacher as an inquirer of teaching should always be associated with others.

Finally, it is notable that Lesson Study is deeply connected to teacher education. Teachers in Japan are used to the custom of collegiate study from the beginning to the end of teaching practice in school. Students in a teacher's training course must take one or two lectures and seminars for didactics (both general and subject) and curriculum development. Lecturers in almost all universities present lesson videos during the courses and encourage discussions around them. Relatively larger universities, mainly national universities of each prefecture, which hold a close connection to prefectural and local administration of schools, can provide students with plenty of opportunities to go to school and be involved in Lesson Study. Teachers at schools are basically (of course not all) open to welcoming those young students because those teachers have also experienced a welcome by their schools as students themselves. Simultaneous processes of research and teacher education seem to be the reason why the culture of continuous improvement in the Lesson Study cycle lays down roots around Japanese schools.

To sum up, Lesson Study is a model unique to Japanese schools. With a foundation that combines research and development in teaching and learning in classrooms, Lesson Study seeks collaborative and qualitative research on education. Deeply rooted in the history of the Japanese schooling system, this grassroots level movement places science at its core. Teachers, as researchers, are expected to integrate research activities in their lessons and to enhance their teaching skills. Because of this, Lesson Study can possibly propose a new idea on both the professionalism of the teacher and the framework for qualitative educational research. Based on these conceptions, the next section introduces Lesson Study at Hiroshima University.

3 Lesson Study at Hiroshima University

As well as other University groups, Hiroshima also has its unique orientation with philosophical basic concepts. Here, the Hiroshima group indicates only a laboratory of educational methods in the department of education, whilst laboratories in subject didactics and the laboratory of educational sociology also intensively hold Lesson Study in distinctive ways.

Hiroshima University places *an interactive process between the teacher and students and among students* at its central focus, especially weighing on its *collective* character. By receiving East German didactics and Soviet psychology, and yet by inflecting its ideological socialistic ideal into a democratic purpose, Hiroshima captures the individual development as both the factor and result of collective-social interaction, in which individuals have potential to affect other individual developments. The classroom as a small society is the place for students to learn, practice, and reflect on how they can con-

tribute to realising a democratic society. In other words, the Hiroshima group assumes that *lesson matters both the depth of cognition on scientific insights and the strength of solidarity among students, as both stand for the reciprocal relationship*. Consequently, that the collective participation in the inquiries on the subjects in lessons promotes both intellectual development and a mutual understanding among students becomes the basic concept for Lesson Study in the Hiroshima group.

Basic concepts allow the Hiroshima group to develop its own methodology to inquire on lessons. To begin with the main perspectives, due to the importance of the depth of learning and mutual understanding through participation, four basic perspectives have been structurally developed:

1. Content analysis (already spread in English as “Kyouzaikenkyuu”),
2. Teacher questions (sometimes translated as “inquiry”: already spread in English as “Hatsumon”),
3. Rule-making for a/the learning environment (sometimes translated as learning discipline) and
4. Group formation (Collectivity and interactivity in the individual thinking process).

As it may imply, the first two categories belong to the teacher’s teaching process, while the other two categories belong to the students’ learning process. All four perspectives are combined together to discover how teaching process and learning process are interlocked to each other in a lesson. It should be noted that perspectives on lessons might flexibly change depending on how the lesson progresses and on the participants’ research interest.

As well as other Lesson Studies around Japan, the Hiroshima group also forms a collaborative Lesson Study team with schools. In most cases, schools request help in implementing Lesson Study, while some cases are initiated by Hiroshima University. In most cases, collaborative Lesson Study in Hiroshima is organised as a whole-school program, involving all teachers and even other workers, like the lunch ladies, janitors, and school nurses, while in few cases, one teacher in a school with a private connection offers Lesson Study to researchers. Lesson Study at each school is held three or four times per year so that the university researcher can observe sequential transition and transformation in the classroom atmosphere and in the quality of the lesson. When Lesson Study is successful, researchers and schoolteachers develop original curriculum designs together, some of which have received favourable recognition from the government. Some of the teachers and principals who get used to the Lesson Study cycle and the customs of the Hiroshima group feel disposed to continue this Lesson Study even after they move to another school. Hence, collaborative Lesson Study is gradually spreading to other schools.

The teacher training course is correlated into this process of collaborative Lesson Study in Hiroshima University. Undergraduate students in the 2nd and 3rd grade voluntarily take a course named "Seminar for Methodology on Educational Research". In this course, students participate in an authentic Lesson Study at several schools, experiencing the whole process from observation, video recording, protocol making, methodological analysis, and feedback formulation. At the feedback stage, teachers who offered the lesson directly hear the students' analysis results and willingly participate in discussions with students. Four aspects are taught to students, but they are not forced to apply. Rather, as a part of his research, the lecturer rejoices at, and seeks, new and unique perspectives as observed from the students' fresh eye. There are also other opportunities to experience Lesson Study in a short version offered for the first-grade students: introduction to general didactics. The case presented in the later section will present a few results of the analysis by the students in this course.

Furthermore, the master's and doctoral course, training course to be researcher, is also associated with this Lesson Study cycle. As Teaching Assistants, some master's and doctoral course students who study specific themes regarding lesson study and didactics, organise and promote the undergraduate students' Lesson Study. Master's students and doctoral students are often invited to Lesson Study by a supervisor, who expects them to give their unique insights on the lesson through their own research interests. The process of broadening and developing their research theme by reading books and refining their insights on the research theme by participating in Lesson Study is basically conceived as "stay between a dictionary and a tape recorder." Some doctoral students have published their articles based on the results of continuous Lesson Study with a school (esp. see Matsuo 2018).

Involving many actors from BA, MA, and doctorate students to school workers, the Hiroshima group implements Lesson Study with following procedure. It may sometimes skip some agenda for flexibility.

Pre-conference – Planning

The professor visits the schools with the BA, MA and DC students, or sometimes, schoolteachers come to the laboratory to hold a discussion. The researcher and teacher (school leaders, esp. principal, vice-principal, and middle leaders from research sections and curriculum coordination in schools) discuss and confirm school annual missions and difficult situations. This start-up discussion is conceived to be important because in Lesson Study, less relevant analysis for school situations should be avoided, and therefore, they should

form a basic agreement on what would be a meaningful teaching practice in the school.

Start-up discussions may determine the focused theme and methodology for Lesson Study effective only for that school. The accumulation of those discussions in recent years informs us that this focused theme ranges from performance-based curriculum to place-based curriculum design. Teachers then promote this theme in daily lessons and classroom management and offer one or two lessons to other teachers and researchers as Lesson Study.

At the pre-conference of Lesson Study, teachers and researchers come together again and discuss the lesson plan that the practitioner (teacher who conducts the lesson) made. The discussion may examine the academic performance of students, classroom atmosphere, content-based advice, comparable examples for the lesson from past lesson studies, and so on. Content analysis (Kyouzaikenkyuu) and examination of the teacher's questions (Hatsumon) may function at this step.

Lesson - Observation

The practitioner invites schoolteachers and researchers with video cameras and voice recorders into his/her classroom and conducts the lesson.

Observing participants are basically allowed to walk around and look into the students' work and notebooks. Observations styled on Lesson Study take the presence of observers into account.

Undergraduate students are expected to learn how they should behave during the Lesson Study: How they can observe and hear school students' discussion without interrupting, where they should stand or crouch, and what notes they should take. Undergraduate students are sometimes required to reflect on how they behaved during the lesson at the seminar back at the university in order to examine methodological significances of their behaviours and judgements.

Conference - Discussion

(Post-)conference takes place at school soon after the lesson. The practitioner first presents a short reflection on his/her practice, and then, the participants discuss the lesson either from the settled perspectives or from free observations. At the end of the discussion, participants formulate their feedback and comments on the lesson.

Post-conference often closes with comments by the university researcher.

Analysis

Lesson Study does not end with the post-conference; it continues with a further detailed analysis with a protocol and video. University researchers with BA, MA, and doctoral students conduct this process.

For discussions, the first impression on the lesson is welcomed. Brainstorming allows them to find several focused topics for further analysis.

Several focused analytic themes through brainstorming will be examined with the collected materials. At this examination, the researcher may ask the practitioner to provide further information on materials such as lesson plan after the observed lesson, students' worksheets, and so on. An analysis is conducted utilising all available information, and then, all the phenomena from the beginning to the end are screened.

The findings are further articulated with the evidence from pictures and protocols.

Feedback

Findings are formulated into feedback. It could be in normative or descriptive sentences.

The practitioner receives feedback and develops his/her new strategy for the lesson.

The results of the analysis are sometimes published on the school bulletin.

The feedback becomes the base for the next discussion for Lesson Study (Back to step 1).

4 Case: Lesson Study with Nisshokan high school (English Lesson 12th grade)

How does Lesson Study actually work? This section strives to facilitate understanding the Lesson Study framework by presenting an exemplary Lesson Study that the authors Yoshida and Miyamoto created in collaboration with Leipzig University in 2018.

Background information about the case

The case is retrieved from Nisshokan high school in north-east Hiroshima prefecture. On 29th November 2018, in the third-grade class with 26 students (two were absent from a total of 28), Mr. Imanaka conducted an English lesson. The Hiroshima group (Yoshida, Miyamoto and one BA, one MA, and two doctoral students), six members from Leipzig University, and some colleague teachers attended the lesson. In this lesson, students were asked to write a

review letter (Figure 1) on the essay “Rude Japanese”, written by Kay Hetherly, which talks about cultural misunderstanding and the importance of mutual understanding of cultures.

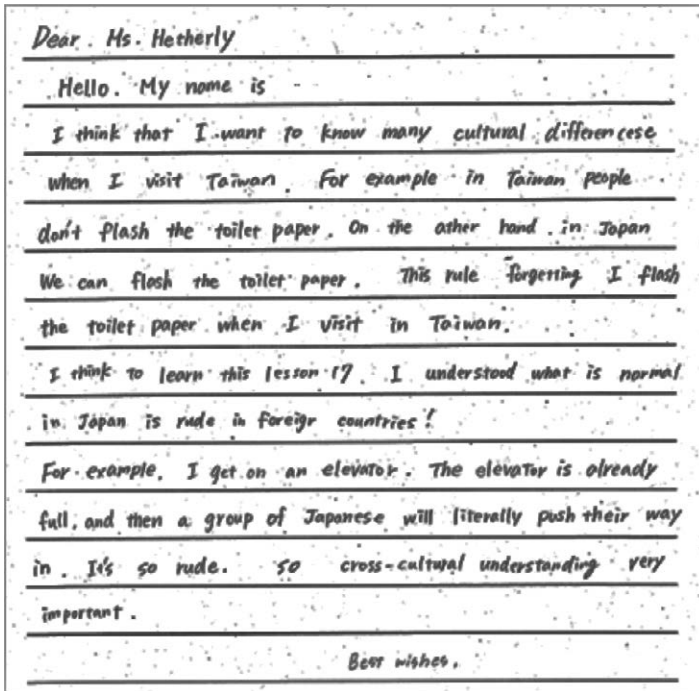


Fig. 1: Student's work, review on essay in a letter form

Only Mr. Imanaka, the teacher, planned this lesson. The observers had no advance information on content structure, text critique, and students' readiness. As for the recording materials, two video cameras at the front and the rear, two cameras, and two voice recorders were prepared. Because the video camera cannot capture the voices of all the 27 people at once, voice recorders were attached to two Hiroshima observers who stood at one place for focused observation on three-four students. The school students were accustomed to the presence of guests in the classroom, and some students had spoken frankly to the observers during the lesson.

As was done with the conventional Lesson Study in Hiroshima, data and materials were collected to the extent possible. The more data we have, the better and the more precise is the conclusion we may reach. In this case, the lesson plan made by the teacher, textbooks, worksheets, video and voice records,

photos (blackboard and posters on walls), seat map, and the school curriculum in the school pamphlet were collected and the audio was transcribed. In Hiroshima, analysing the data involved undergraduate (BA) students. The professor brought this lesson into his lecture 'Introduction to general didactics' and held a workshop-styled Lesson Study with undergraduate students. They were instructed that subjective ideas were very welcome; however, they were advised to be ready to open a unique understanding for this lesson. Based on these basic interests and concerns, the BA students formulated the inquiry theme of this lesson or the hypothesis that this lesson would probably maintain. 16 key concepts were introduced to the BA students so that their thinking process could be smoothened and well-structured. Despite the fact that most students were concerned about the academic achievement in this lesson where no clear English performance could have been observed and that those who screened all worksheets and curriculum mappings as their methodologies struggled with the analysis of the lesson beyond attaching blame and negative comments on the lesson, some of those who had been interested in the teacher's action and physical expressions in the interaction with students brought unique insights on Mr. Imanaka's pedagogical orientation. The theme navigates the construction methodology. What they wanted to know determined what data they needed and how they should process the data. Some students required the professor to do a follow-up interview with Mr. Imanaka to acquire more information about the lesson and students. They were required to conduct the creative analysis on the lesson, tried to describe the result of the analysis, and formulated notions and messages (feedback) on the lesson to the teacher.

Results of the Analyses

First, let us begin with the teacher's physical extension. One BA student wondered that Mr. Imanaka remained at the front, talked too much, and seemed less interactive with the students during the lesson. He then started to track the teacher's footsteps and sketched it on the seat map (Figure 2). Some remarkable points were established. It may possibly be because of high school; however, the teacher remained at the front almost 80-90% of the lesson. When he walked into the students' area, he walked only along the vertical path but not along the horizontal path. While walking through the students' seating area, he paid attention only to a few students, i.e. b3, g16, and g9 (highlighted with circles). Other students were just glanced at, and some students at the back had barely interacted with the teacher (represented with a square).

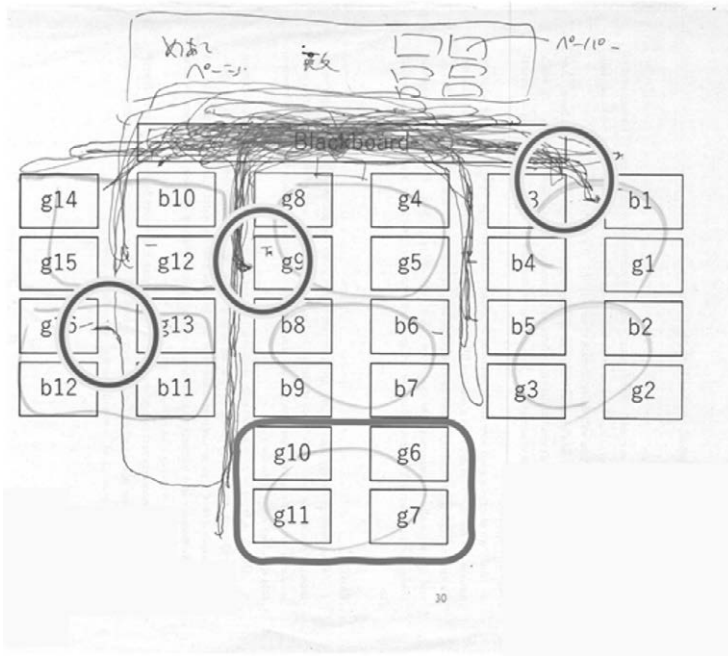
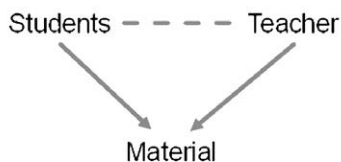


Fig. 2: Teacher walk with remarks

Focus on physicality also provided another point of view about how the teacher communicated with the students (Figure 3). The impression that the teacher was less communicative was due to the analysis. When the teacher walked by a student, it was frequently observed that the teacher looked at the materials more than observing the students, although the students often looked up at the teacher. The teacher talked through the materials. Hence, the impression "less communicative" stands amended since he was indirectly communicative, or he was interactive with the materials. His particular style of communication would suggest that the relationship construction between teaching and learning would appear by placing something between two actors.



Fig. 3: Eyes and face in Interaction through material



With regard to the mediated communication via materials between the teacher and students, the use of the blackboard also seemed to play an important role in Mr. Imanaka's practice (Figure 4). First impressions heard from the BA students and the MA and doctoral analysis group informs us that it seemed a bit unstructured, but somehow it seemed to work. Then, when we categorise the parts of the blackboard and identify how it was used, it could be categorised into three functions. A) Tasks: presenting an assignment and activity; B) Scaffolding: key vocabularies called "word map" in this lesson are not just to be memorised but facilitated the students' writing effectively and were replete with messages; C) Note: the teacher spared the room for responding to the students. When the teacher walked by seat g16 and had a short conversation with her, the teacher walked up to the blackboard and wrote a phrase and recommended its use. In addition to the textbooks, the blackboard was also the place for interaction with the students. A variety of didactical functions to promote the students' activity was packed into this plate.

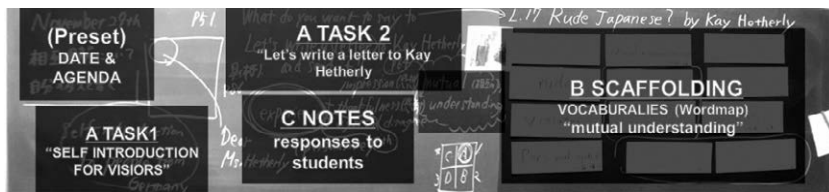


Fig. 4: Blackboard

While the physical and vocal actions performed by Mr. Imanaka indicated that didactical interaction between the teacher and students might be effectively supported by the use of media like textbooks and blackboards, listening to his own desires on curriculum design would bring about a different aspect about communication, in other words, reveal a sort of dilemma that he was experiencing. Namely, as the head of the research section in the school, he had been making all the efforts to create a highly original curriculum design in collaboration with the Professor. Though there were seemingly some problems regarding obscurity of what was “taught” or what was “learned”, a broader viewpoint showed that the school curriculum covered this aspect adequately. Glancing at the whole curriculum revealed that Nisshokan high school provided students with many opportunities to communicate with foreigners through the year. According to the annual research Bulletin by Nisshokan high school, students were assigned to guide foreign visitors through their town and to have a discussion session with college students from all over the world. The task assigned in the lesson “Let’s write a letter to send it to her (Kay Hetherly)!” was also connected to this program as a means of sending the students’ essay review letters directly to Kay Hetherly in England and receiving a response directly from her. Throughout the whole curriculum in Nisshokan high school, in and outside the English curriculum, the development of communication skills was the most prioritised matter. Because of that, in spite of arguable refutations that English lessons should be either academic training or communicative training, it is undeniably clear that Nisshokan students focused on learning English for communication in authentic situations of addressing and responding. When they wrote a guide for visitors, the visitors thanked them and advised them on improvements for better guidance. When they wrote letters to Hetherly, Hetherly responded to them. As such, as the bulletin articulated the nature of Nisshokan curriculum as “Authenticity” or “situation that compels students to speak”, this school curriculum initiated by Mr. Imanaka prioritises authentic learning under the communication of addressing and responding.

The basic concept of direct, interactive, and authentic learning now sounds incoherent to Mr. Imanaka’s presence in the lesson. It seemed as if the teacher was avoiding direct communication with the students, often placing himself behind them. These gaps – direct communication as the main concept of the curriculum and indirect communication / less presence of teacher – could be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, the teacher had a problem and struggled to maintain direct communication with students, for which some “solutions” or “advice” should be given to adhere to the main curricular concept. On the other hand, the teacher himself recognised the need to remain in this ambivalent position because he is not the one whom students should face

and ultimately interchange with but the only one who could directly provide for and facilitate further communication. This conflicting finding was reformulated into the feedback statement.

Formulation of feedback as the synthesis of results of analyses

Feedback to Mr. Imanaka was provided by combining the analyses into a synthesis. Apart from the impressions pointing to reduced communicative activity and the obscurity of the academic achievement of students, the results of the analyses could be synthesised into a finding of inconsistency between curricular design and teaching behaviour. Neither should feedback merely blame the teacher critically, nor should it disregard the practitioner's willingness to engage and question, on the contrary, feedback should encourage his/her inquiries that he or she apparently and latently had displayed in practice. In other cases, it is also possible that normative assertions like "you should do this" can be delivered only if the researcher and teachers share their norms very well in a shared context.

Given the position of Mr. Imanaka as a middle leader in school, preferable feedback seemed to first present the findings and then conclude in the form of a question about the presence and positioning of the teacher in the lesson: What roles do teachers in Nisshokan play for students and how/where should they be in the classroom during a lesson? The Hiroshima group concluded that inconsistent functions among the desired curricular concepts and the actual presence during the lesson would propose a unique didactical insight that active communicative process by students is possible when the teacher stands behind at the interactive moment to facilitate the communication. Hence, the Hiroshima group is figuring out and questioning the unique positioning of teachers in the process of authentic learning, which, according to them, would not be successful if the teachers step forward and face the students. Not only did Mr. Imanaka's practice open this inquiry, but he also proposed several effective mediating tools to promote the students' interactive process.

4 Conclusion

Lesson Study as qualitative educational research proposes an integrated research concept of research and development. Despite the traditional uniqueness rooted deep in the history of education in Japan, it now enjoys widespread expansion worldwide, as one of the most effective and practical teacher educational frameworks (Kim et al. 2021). Attributions of Lesson Study are summarised into three points that propose a new educational research approach in an orientation toward a developmental aspect, a new shaping

capacity of professionalism of the teacher as a researcher, and the applicability of educational research into teacher education. The comparison and contrast with the current paradigm in qualitative educational research would indicate significant differences that might sometimes be unacceptable for some research framework norms.

Hiroshima University inherits those attributions and especially places great emphasis on collaborative Lesson Study involving not only teachers but also BA, MA, and doctoral students under the strong assumption that Lesson Study could be a correlative place for educational research, teacher in-service education, pre-service education, and doctoral research training. With its philosophical background, it is not an exaggerated expression that educational research (didactics) in the Hiroshima group goes along with practical reflections in Lesson Study.

Methodological reflection is now increasingly the updated discussion in Lesson Study. Lesson Study at Hiroshima University in five steps has been and is prioritising four major concepts as the perspective of analysis, which has been sophisticated through the series of Lesson Study.

"Stay between a dictionary and a tape recorder." Lesson Study from Japanese traditions can contribute to the placement of qualitative educational research into the integrated arena of producing scientific inquiry and promoting teacher education.

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