Japanese Preschool Educators' Cultural Practices and Beliefs

About the Pedagogy of Social-Emotional Development

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines Japanese preschool teachers' cultural practices and beliefs about the pedagogy of social-emotional development. The study is an interview-based, ethnographic study, which is based on the video-cued mutivocal ethnographic method. This study focuses on the emic terms that Japanese preschool teachers use to explain their practices, such as *amae* (dependency), *omoiyari* (empathy), *sabishii* (loneliness), *mimamoru* (watching and waiting) and *garari* (peripheral participation).

My analysis suggests that *sabishii*, *amae*, and *omoiyari* form a triad of emotional exchange that has a particular cultural patterning and salience in Japan and in the Japanese approach to the socialization of emotions in early childhood. Japanese teachers think about the development of the class as a community, which is different from individual-centric Western pedagogical perspective that gives more attention to each child's development. *Mimamoru* is a pedagogical philosophy and practice in Japanese early childhood education.

A key component of Japanese teachers' cultural practices and beliefs about the pedagogy of social-emotional development is that the process requires the development not only of children as individuals, but also of children in a preschool class as a community. In addition, the study suggests that at a deeper level these emic concepts reflect more general Japanese cultural notions of time, space, sight, and body.

This dissertation concludes with the argument that teachers' implicit cultural practices and beliefs is "A cultural *art* of teaching." Teachers' implicit

cultural practices and beliefs are harmonized in the teachers' mind and body, making connections between them, and used depending on the nuances of a situation, as informed by teachers' conscious and unconscious thoughts.

The study has also shown evidence of similar practices and logic vertically distributed within Japanese early childhood education, from the way teachers act with children, to the way directors act with teachers, to the way government ministries act with directors, to the way deaf and hearing educators act with their deaf and hearing students. Because these practices are forms of bodily habitus and implicit Japanese culture, it makes sense that they are found across fields of action.

To My Grandfather, Shingo Koizumi

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INTRODUCTION

The best known scene in Tobin, Wu, and Davidson's 1989 book and video

Preschool in Three Cultures is when Hiroki, a four-year-old boy at Komatsudani

Hoikuen (daycare center) in Kyoto, steps on the hand of a classmate making him

cry, and his teacher, Fukui-sensei does not intervene. In *Preschool in Three*

Cultures Revisited (2009), the sequel to the original study, authors Tobin, Hsueh,

and Karasawa present and analyze scene of fighting at Komatsudani. In the new

Komatsudani video, as in the original study, there is a scene where a Japanese

teacher does not intervene during a physical fight and subsequent verbal dispute

among a group of children. In the new and original studies, the teachers seen in

these videos as well as other Japanese early childhood educators explain the

thinking that lies behind their decisions not to intervene in children's fights. Tobin

and his co-authors emphasize Japanese teachers' beliefs about how their strategic

non-interventions can help children directly involved in fights best learn about

emotions and social relations.

After the *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study was completed, I

went back to the original interviews conducted with Japanese teachers and

directors. In the course of reviewing these transcripts, I noticed something that

authors had missed before in comments from an interview with Director Kumagai

of Senzan Yochien in Kyoto. As Director Kumagai watches the scene in the

Komatsudani video where a group of girls fight over the teddy bear, she

comments: "Look, there is a *gyarari* (gallery). Fights are important for the

children who are not fighting. Teachers should pay attention to them, and to consider what *they* are learning."

This comment opened up a whole new set of issues that failed to make it into *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited*. I was able to see how her unusual use of the English loan word, *gyarari* (gallery), suggests a connection to the notion of peripheral participation and community. This one quote from Director Kumagai opened up for me a new perspective and set of issues that became one of the chapters of the dissertation.

This is one example of how this dissertation is organized. Each chapter involves deepening and widening the analyses from the *Preschool in Three Cultures* studies. I do this in using several ways: the original videos as cues to re-interview teachers and directors, using the original videos new ways, and re-analyzing transcripts from the original studies. This process leads to the chapters of the dissertation; feeling, gallery, *mimamoru*, hands-off approach, and strength of implicit cultural beliefs and practices.

My Focus

In this dissertation, my focus is narrower than the *Preschool in Three Cultures* studies both because this dissertation is about one country rather than three, and because my central concern is Japanese teachers' cultural practices about how to support children's social-emotional development. There are strengths of the PSin3C's three-culture comparisons, but there are also strengths in a one-culture study. Unlike the Psin3C studies, mine is not an explicitly comparative study. But nevertheless, by writing in English, in the US academic

context, about Japanese preschool teachers' implicit pedagogical beliefs and practices, this study presents new ideas to English speaking readers and in this way can be considered a form of comparative education scholarship.

One of the most important goals of child development in Japan, as elsewhere, is helping children develop social skills and helping them learn to be a member of society. One important facet of social development is emotional development, which includes understanding and showing one's own emotions as well as understanding and responding to the emotions of others (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). Research has shown that while there are some aspects of emotional development that are much the same across cultures (Eisenberg, 1992), there are also cultural differences and culturally specific ways of feeling, showing one's feelings, and responding to the feelings of others (Benedict, 1946; Doi, 1973; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Lebra, 1976;Travis, 1998). I use "social-emotional development" rather than "social and emotional development" in the dissertation because I think that young children at preschool age deal with psychological skills they need to become functional, appropriate members of the community. In another way to put this is that social and emotional developments happen simultaneously. And they are inseparable connected process.

Preschools play a central role in the socialization of young children in contemporary Japan. Almost all Japanese children attend preschool for at least two years, usually starting at age 3, which is a key period for the development of emotion and social skills (Oda, 1997). Japanese preschool teachers therefore play

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a major role in children's social-emotional development. More generally, preschools are key sites of enculturation, sites where young children learn to be appropriate members of their culture. Therefore, in Japanese preschools, one of the main things Japanese children learn is to be Japanese.

However, teaching children to be Japanese is not explicitly discussed in kindergarten guidelines or taught in teacher education programs. Nor are teachers given much direct, explicit instruction in how to promote children's social emotional development. In the absence of explicit direction, teachers depend on what Tobin, Hseuh, and Karasawa call "implicit cultural practices and beliefs" (2009, p.19). Social-emotional development is emphasized in the Ministry guidelines (*The Course of Study about Early Childhood Education and Care*, 2008), as is empathy. But there is nothing in the Standards and little in textbooks to tell teachers what to do when children fight or when a child cries or is sad. These are practices that are not taught systematically to Japanese preschool teachers, and yet there are common approaches and perspectives found across preschools, suggesting the presence of a culturally shared beliefs about teaching. Whereas previous studies have documented the importance of cultural influences on social-emotional development, they did not explore educators' cultural practices and beliefs about social-emotional development. Likewise, although previous studies refer to the importance of the teachers' role, there are few studies of Japanese preschool teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

I am going to explore Japanese preschool educators' beliefs about the pedagogy of social-emotional development in this dissertation. Although an

ethnographic study looks for patterns across informants as well as areas of disagreement, my study focus on culturally shared patterns. What beliefs and theories are guiding the teachers practice as they go through the day in their classrooms? What are their shared cultural beliefs about teaching young children's social-emotional development?

The Theoretical Grounding

The conceptual framework I use in this dissertation is from several disciplines: anthropology (psychological anthropology), education (anthropological education), and child development. I empathize preschool as cultural settings and the ways teachers' think and talk about their practices as cultural beliefs system.

This study is educational anthropology because I focus on teachers' practices in schools. **"**There is no single, universal truth about teaching. At the same time, knowledge for teaching is not a matter of individual choice"(Anderson-Levitt, 2002, p.5). Instead, knowledge about teaching is made up of shared meanings, a sharing of meaning to which anthropologists apply the word "culture" (Anderson-Levitt, 2002). Bruner (1996) writes: "Learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources" (p.4). Anderson-Levitt (2002) concludes: "If teaching knowledge is not idiosyncratic, then it is shared. If it is not derived from the raw nature of teaching situations, then, it depends on the meanings people assign to those situations" (p.7). This orientation is similar to what Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) call "teachers' knowledge" and to what Tobin et al.

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(2009, p.19) call "implicit cultural practices and beliefs." In this dissertation I build on these notions to explore the shared cultural meanings of Japanese preschool teachers.

In general, teaching is viewed as a personal skill. Nonetheless, although teachers create something personal out of what they know, very little of the knowledge on which they draw is idiosyncratic, that is, unique to one person. Rather, "they dip into a common well for ideas" (p.6) and they create new ways of teaching within relatively narrow constraints (Anderson-Levitt, 2002). "Clearly, what counts as 'individual' depends on the comparative frame. When you compare a number of teachers within the same country, the differences among them stand out, and you come away remarking about the individualistic nature of teaching. But you may have neglected to notice the great store of knowledge and practice that all of these teachers hold in common" (Anderson-Levitt, 2002, p.7). These quotes from Anderson-Levitt articulate the central conceptual framework and focus of this study, which explores the generally shared ideas, beliefs, insights, and habits of teachers that enable them to do their work in school.

This dissertation is also psychological anthropology, following in a long tradition of studying how children become a member of their culture. Most of this research has been conducted not in schools but in homes and villages. Preschool is a relatively new institution in which most children in Japan, as in many other countries, first experience being a member of a group and the first context in which they come face to face with a group of peers. I view preschools as key

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institutions influencing contemporary children's social-emotional development and preschool educators, therefore as key informants for understanding cultural practices and beliefs about pedagogy of social-emotional development in Japanese Early Childhood Education.

I am concerned specifically with how Japanese preschool educators think and talk about the role they play in young children's social-emotional development. I conceptualize social development as "the preparation of the young to manage the tasks of social life and involves the continuous interplay between social-cultural mechanisms by which the environment serves to shape and strengthen those competencies and variations in the child's biological, social, and cognitive outcomes that occur in response to the experienced environment" (Bugental & Grusec, 2006, p.366). Emotional development is the development of "the desire to take action, including the desire to escape, approach, or change people or things in the environment" (Siegler, DeLoache, & Eisenberg, 2003, p.373). I use the term "social-emotional development" instead of "social and emotional development" to emphasize that social development and emotional development are closely connected to each other, especially in young children's socialization/enculturation (Stevenson, Azuma, & Hakuta, 1986).

Social-Emotional Development

Social-emotional development is a topic with a long research history across several fields, including biology, psychology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis. Charles Darwin published the book *The expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* in 1872. He suggested that there are universal

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forms of emotional expression found across races, and in animals as well as man, expressing the same state of mind, with the same facial muscular movements. One hundred years later in psychology, Paul Ekman (1972) introduced his categorization of the universal facial expressions, initiating a debate on the question of whether there are universal expressions and recognitions of emotions (Ekman, 1972; Russell, 1994). James Russell (1994) suggests that "Facial expressions and emotion labels are associated, but the association may vary from culture to culture and is loose enough to be consistent with various alternative accounts" (p. 104). In a reply to Russell's paper, Ekman (1994) argues that both literate and preliterate cultures have much the same facial expressions, suggesting that these expressions and therefore the emotions behind them may be universal. Another key, long standing debate about emotions concerns the relationship of the mind and the body in relation to emotions. James William wrote in 1884 that "the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur is the emotion" (p.189). He points out, for instance, that crying may precede rather than follow an awareness of the emotion of feeling sad, an observation opens up investigations into the complex relationships among emotions, facial expressions, and biological reactions. His observations show how physical manifestations are tied to emotions in complex ways.

The study of the social development of young children has long been a core concern of cultural anthropologists. A classic account of Japanese social relations from the perspective of anthropology is *The Chrysanthemum and the*

Sword by Ruth Benedict (1946). In the tradition of the field that came to be known as psychological anthropology, Benedict explored the socialization practices of parents as attempts to shape the child to meet the specific social demands of Japanese culture, an argument that is especially explicit in her discussion of shame. Her work tried to explain the development of the modal "Japanese personality" through examination of practices of breast-feeding, toileting, and other early experiences emphasized in psychoanalytic theory. In addition, anthropologists have studied child discipline, along with parents' attitudes about what constitutes a socially appropriate occasion and appropriate forms of expression of emotion. For instance, the Japanese psychoanalyst Takeo Doi (1973) has attempted to explain much of Japanese personality from the point of view of a single emic concept, *amae* (dependency). His work suggests that there is a strong cultural component to the development of the self.

Another classic piece of research on socializing children in Japan are the studies of William Caudill's work. He observed mother-infant interaction in Japan and suggested that Japanese mothers, in comparison with their American peers, give more emphasis to close, physical contact. In addition, a Japanese mother views her baby as an extension of herself and feels that she knows what is best for him/her. Therefore, there is much less need for verbal communication (Caudill & Schooler, 1973). In another paper, Caudill states that emotions are not verbally expressed as much in Japan as in the U.S. (Caudill, 1962).

This quick survey of key studies of emotion suggests the connections in this field of research among biology, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and

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psychoanalysis. Keeping such an interdisciplinary perspective in mind is important for my study because children and teachers experience the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of social-emotional development all at once, rather than as separate domains. For example, a three-year-old Japanese girl simultaneously is learning to be Japanese, female, and an appropriate and liked member of her class. Most research on young children's social-emotional development has been conducted not in schools but in homes and communal areas of rural villages and town squares. As Hayashi, Karasawa, and Tobin (2009) suggest, "This is because until recently (the last 50 years or so) most young children in Japan as in most other industrialized cultures spent most of the day not in the preschools but being cared for by relatives, who were often themselves (older) children (Whiting & Edwards, 1988)." In contemporary Japan as in many other contemporary cultures, almost all children attend two or three years of preschool. This means that preschools have become key sites for cultural transmission.

Japanese Preschools and Teachers on Social-Emotional Development

There have been some studies of Japanese preschools that discuss preschool teachers' classroom management practices. Tobin, Wu, and Davidson (1987) suggest that Japanese preschools' large class-size and high student/teacher ratios offer children opportunities to experience the pleasures and responsibilities of life in a group. Catherine Lewis (1984) suggests that at the preschool level teachers manage large classes by delegating authority to *toban* (monitors) and by interacting with the class as a whole rather than with students individually,

thereby minimizing competition among the children for the teacher's energy, time, and attention. Both of these works suggest that Japanese approaches to misbehavior and classroom management are tied to concerns about the social development of young children. Tobin et al. (1989) report that giving children experience being a member of a group is the most important reason given by Japanese early childhood educators for children to attend preschool. Lewis (1995) observes that preschool teachers handle most disputes not by stopping the fights, but instead by asking other children to help to resolve disputes. Lois Peak (1991) suggests that Japanese teachers focus on establishing harmony between children. Merry White and Robert LeVine (1986) point out that an important characteristic of a "good child" in Japan is being able to maintain harmony in human relationships. Peak (1991) and White and LeVine (1986) emphasis that, "harmony" is a key term for understanding Japanese preschool teachers' approaches to both emotional and social development. Tobin et al. (1989) also discuss emotional development in Japanese preschool. The top answer given by Japanese teachers to their question "What are the most important things for children to learn in preschool?" is "sympathy/empathy/concern for others."

White and LeVine (1986) identified everyday words used by Japanese educators to describe characteristics of children. Among the key Japanese concepts they identify are *otonasii* (mild), *sunao* (obedient), *gambaru* (persist), and *gaman suru* (endure). Their approach follows the example of Doi (1973) who analyzed the centrality of the concept of *amae*. As White and LeVine (1986) state, "Doi opened up the possibility of a clinical psychiatry not exclusively Western in

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its conceptual apparatus, but striving for transcultural validity from a base in two cultures. Beginning with the resistance of emic concepts to translation, Doi moved toward what Werner and Campbell (1970) have called a 'de-centered' position that transcends the limited perspectives of 'source' and 'target' languages alike" (p.56). Continuing this tradition of research, I will focus on extending the semantic and ethnopsychological concepts which White and LeVine (1986) identified, and connect these concepts to Japanese teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices.

I have offered quick summary of what has been done about studies of Japanese preschools. I will wait until each chapter to talk about how my analysis is the same or different than other these studies.

Method

This is an interview-based ethnographic study of teachers' beliefs and practices. This study is ethnographic in being a study of the implicit cultural beliefs and practices of the pedagogy of Japanese preschool teachers about social-emotional development concepts that are unfamiliar and exotic to my readers, and to some extent to me, as scholars who have no experience teaching in Japanese preschools.

It is also ethnographic in method in the use of videotape to stimulate reflection and discussion. This "video-cued multivocal ethnographic" method was developed by Joseph Tobin and his colleagues for their study, *Preschool in Three Cultures: Japan, China, and the United States* (1989). This study has been praised for introducing a powerful new methodological tool, the use of a complex video

cue to stimulate a multivocal and multicultural conversation (Tobin, 2006). I

adapt and extend this method in my study. My method differs from that of Tobin

et. al. in being more narrowly focused (on teachers views of social-emotional

development); by doing more in-depth interviews (with 43 teachers and directors,

in repeated discussions, in contrast to the several hundred educators interviewed

in each country in the PSin3C studies); by asking teachers to respond not to the 20

minute videos as a whole, but instead to selected scenes; and finally by combining

the video-cued interviews with interviews featuring verbal questions.

This approach is designed to give teachers opportunities to explicate their

approach to supporting children's social emotional development. Given the

implicit nature of their beliefs on this topic, direct questions (such as "What is

your approach to social-emotional development?") are unlikely to work. Video

cues combined with in-depth follow up interview questions give teachers

opportunities to make these implicit beliefs explicit.

The Power of Video-cues

In this method, as Tobin (2006) explains, "videotape is primarily not data

but rather than a cue or stimulus, like a set of interview questions in conventional

social science research or an inkblot in a psychological study." This method's

basic assumption is that the video material the research team shoots and edits is a

stimulus that is "simultaneously richer, better contextualized, and less abstract

than a verbal question asked in an interview" (Tobin, 2006).

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The Use of Videos in This Study

In this study I (re)use the videos from the *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study. Unlike the approach of the original study, I have added a step of doing systematic analyses of these videos as well as using them as interviewing cues. I use this analysis to select scenes and issues to focus on in the interviews as well as to uncover patterns of emic practice. For example, one of the scenes I use for this study shows a group of girls fighting over a teddy bear. During the video-cued interview process of the PSin3CR study, the teachers and directors as well as the researchers focused on the girls who are fighting. However, by shifting our attention from the girls who are fighting and expand our view, I can refocus our attention on several other children watching the fight. In my interviews I showed teachers and directors this scene, and ask them to notice and comment on the observing children, and what, if anything, this interaction might mean for their social-emotional development.

Re-focusing Literally and Metaphorically

I reanalyze the transcripts from the interviews with Japanese early childhood educators conducted for *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited.* I also re-interview some of the informants who had participated in the study and asked them to again watch and comment on the videos. I re-edited the videos. I went back to the originally shot uncut footage, selecting shots that weren't used in the original studies. I use these re-edited videos to shift/narrow the focus of the interviews and to introduce new topics.

Secondary Analysis

I go deeper than the authors could in the *Preschool in Three Cultures* studies. Although researchers conducting ethnographies try to pay attention to everything their informants' tell them, a study as wide-ranging in its interests as *Preschool in Three Cultures* produces too much information to allow for a deep analysis of each of the emic concepts that arise. As Merry White (1990) points out in her review of the original *Preschool in Three Cultures,* "Comparing China, Japan, and the United States required many subtle cultural translations, some of which are inadequately achieved in this book." In *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* (2009) study, there are emic terms mentioned by Japanese educators that receive little discussion in the book, concepts including *mimamoru* and *sabishii.* These are examples of terms related to social-emotional development that I focus on in my study.

Dialogic

I have conducted ongoing conversations with informants. I re-interviewed some of the informants who had participated in the study for *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* and asked them again to watch and comment on the videos. I have been in dialogue with some of them from 2002 until now, such as the interviews I conducted with Director Kumagai at Senzan Youchien in Kyoto in 2002 (July), 2003 (Jan), 2005 (May), 2007 (June), 2008 (June), and 2009 (June).

This dialogic interview process allows me to go deep not likely a person say one interesting thing. The *Preschool in Three Cultures Studies* produced patterns of responses based on interview with hundreds of informants. This large

sample of informants protects me from making misleading conclusions based on the relatively small number of informants I re-interviewed. Another valuable feature of my approach is that some informants who were not comfortable saying a lot the first time they were interviewed have become more comfortable talking on repeat interviews. In some cases, teachers who were just beginning their career at the time they were interviewed for the original study become more able to reflect their own practices as they become older and more experienced.

Key Informants

Ethnographic studies often rely on key informants who are unusually good at noticing and explaining core concepts. This does not mean that they are the only ones who hold these concepts, but rather they are able to verbalize the concepts more readily and better than most members of their culture. To determine if the insights of these key informants are consistent with beliefs of other Japanese teachers I used a variety of strategies including a dialogic interview process and going back and asking other teachers more questions about the concepts and perspectives raised by key informants.

Interpretations

Although in this dissertation I make use of teacher reflections on the practices and behaviors seen in the videotapes and I put forward emic categories of analysis, approaches used by Tobin and his colleagues, my approach differs from the original book in giving greater emphasis to explanations that come from me, the researcher, rather than solely from the teachers. These explanations, while, I would suggest, consistent with the teachers' reflections, are at a more

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meta-level of analysis; these are interpretations and explanations of teaching

approaches that reflect a cultural logic that is not taught in teacher training

programs or found in education textbooks or, in most cases, consciously available

to practitioners anymore than is the deep grammatical structure of the language

they speak. I suggest that in most cases when Japanese teachers talk about the

gallery and *mimamoru* they do so not because they were taught to do so in their

early childhood education courses or because they consciously intend to scaffold

children's emotional development, but because it seems like the right thing to do.

These actions are therefore more usefully thought of as cultural schema or as

forms of culturally embedded logic than as (conscious) pedagogical strategies. I

am not suggesting that these actions are incidental, or unintended, nor that they

are hidden, in the sense sometimes implied by the term "hidden curriculum,"

which is often (but not always) used to describe the way schools work as sites to

reproduce and transmit social inequality (Apple, 1979; Jackson, 1968). Rather, by

calling these practices "implicit," I am emphasizing that they are cultural beliefs

and practices that are widely shared by practitioners and passed down from

generation to generation of teachers, without needing to be codified, written

down, or explicitly taught.

The method I used to bring these implicit beliefs and practices to the level

of explicitness is to analyze the reflections of Japanese teachers and directors

reflecting on some scenes in the video in a Japanese preschool, scenes that feature

teachers talking with children about emotions and strategically intervening and

not intervening in children's disputes. The goal of my discussions of the data is to

use my insider and outside knowledge of Japanese culture and Japanese preschools to construct a Japanese ethnopsychological and ethnopedagogical understanding of the teaching of social emotional development in Japanese preschool. Much of my discussion focuses on identifying characteristic words and phrases Japanese practitioners use to talk about social-emotional development and to reflect on the linguistic range of the use of these terms as both everyday and technical expressions and concepts.

Videotapes

I used as interviewing cues the videos of Komatsudani Hoikuen in Kyoto and Madoka Yochien in Tokyo that were made by Tobin, Hsueh, and Karasawa in 2002, for their sequel to *Preschool in Three Cultures* (1989). The video tapes were made by videotaping a day in a preschool and editing the tape down to 20 minutes producing a video that shows a more or less typical day including scenes of arrival and departure, of play both indoor and outdoor, of free play, of more structured learning activities, and of lunch, snack, bathroom, and nap times (see below Figure 1-6). In addition, they filmed examples of parents and children saying good-bye, of children fighting and cooperating, and of teachers' instruction, comforting, and disciplining children (Tobin et al, 1989).

Figure 1. Arrival   *Figure 2*. Group play   *Figure 3*. Lunch

Figure 4. Nap times   *Figure 5*. Outdoor play   *Figure 6*. Departure

Interview Format

I showed Japanese teachers and directors the videotapes using a portable

VCR and a TV monitor, and a remote control that allows me to fast-forward (see

a Figure 7).

Figure 7. Method

I begin the sessions by saying "I am going to show you a 20 minute videotape. Please feel free to stop the videotape with a remote control if you want to comment on something about a scene or ask a question. I will also stop the videotape to ask questions about a scene." I close the interviews with these questions: "Is there anything else you would like to tell me? Do you want to go back to anything we discussed earlier?" My role is a facilitator, to encourage all informants to speak, to ask follow up questions, and to clarify what I think has been said. During the interviews, I asked the educators to explain their interpretations of the scenes in the videotapes. My focus is not on teachers' behavior, but on teachers' practices and beliefs. When I add the explanations of the teachers, I was able to know their practice and beliefs.

I conducted both individual interviews and focus-group interviews. I interviewed the directors and experts individually and teachers in focus groups with their colleagues. The interviews were audio-taped and detailed hand-written notes were taken. Each interview took about 2 hours: with 40 minutes of watching videotapes and over an hour of discussion.

Interview Scenes and Questions

Each scene in these 20 minutes videos functions as a nonverbal question, a cue to stimulate a response that provide insight into the beliefs and practices of an informant (Tobin et al, 2009). I focused my questions on six scenes, the scenes in the Komatsudani video I call "sad fish," "girls fight," and "older children taking care of younger children," and three scenes in the Madoka video I call "lunch time," "boys fight," and "a teacher performing feeling." I have selected these

scenes because each raises a different question about how teachers approach the task of supporting children's social-emotional development. My questions were also guided by my ethnographic conceptual framework, a framework which led me to attend to 1) customs and norms, 2) rules and taboos, 3) taxonomies of meaning, 4) sociolinguistics, and 5) world view.

To get at these issues, I asked questions such as, "What would you do in this situation? "Can you explain why the teacher in the video did not intervene in the fight?" "What is the goal having older children play with babies?" "What do you mean by the word *omoiyari* (empathy)?" "Can you give me some examples of when you use this expression?" The purpose of the interviews is to elicit the emic terms Japanese educators use to make sense of their practice. In order to achieve my goals, I used several strategies in the interviews such as bringing in outsider's points of view to create contrast. Here is one example:

"Sad fish"

Once the children have folded their papers into the shape of a fish, Morita-sensei says, "It seems so sad without a mouth or eyes. What should we do? I'll take a marker, and draw an eye on my fish, like this."
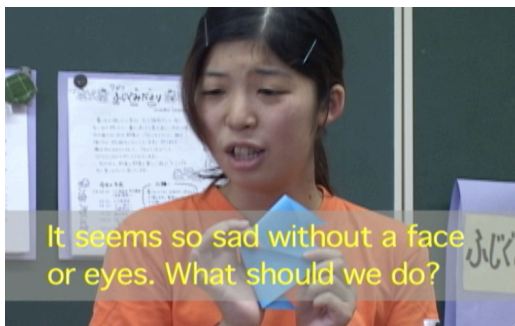
Figure 8. Sad Fish

"Sad" is one of the salient emotional words used by preschool teachers in Japan. I asked interviewees, "What do you think about this scene?" "Why does she use the term 'sad'?" "And what does this term mean to you?"

Site, Informant, and Typicality

This method raises questions of typicality. If I were using videotapes as data, a videotape of one program would not be adequate. However, I am using these videotapes not primarily as data but as stimuli or cues to get information. The important point for these videotapes to work as stimuli is that they are typical enough so that viewers will find what they show familiar and unexceptional.

For site selection, I balanced the size and the location of the cities as well as the social class of the families the preschools serve. I interviewed 43 Japanese educators. I conducted interviews with teachers and directors in eight preschools, including *Youchien* and *Hoikuen,* both public and private, in both Tokyo and Kyoto in order to get a wide range of variation. In Japan, there are two basic system structures in early childhood education, *youchien* (which can be translated into English as nursery school or kindergarten) and *hoikuen (day-care centers)*. There are both public and private versions of each. I use the generic term "preschool" for both institutions. Teachers of public schools tend to stay in the profession for many years compared with teachers of private programs, who tend to turn over more quickly. This gives me a variation of new and experienced teachers.

I interviewed the six directors from these preschools, as well as an average of four teachers per school. I also interviewed three preschool experts who are

university faculty or employees of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). I went back to the preschools where the videotapes were made in Tokyo and Kyoto.

Tension of Being Both an Insider and Outsider

The insider/outsider issue is a core tension of ethnography. An ethnography (traditionally) is a summary of a culture written by an outsider. The anthropologist lives among the people he or she studies, away from all that is familiar. The anthropologist conducting a participant observation study is the community member who knows the least about the culture. This dynamic allows the ethnographer to ask and get answers to naïve, basic questions. I am from Japan, studying in the United States, becoming an ethnographer who taught in a preschool in the U.S. I am an outsider in terms of studying Japanese teachers because I do not have any teaching experiences in early childhood classroom settings in Japan.

In terms of nationality, I am an insider. An ethnographer is traditionally an outsider studying a foreign culture and in the process of doing so an ethnographer becomes an outsider to his own culture, by the working of ethnography's dictum that by making the exotic familiar, the familiar becomes exotic. I have become more and more of an outsider to Japan the longer I have stayed in the US. And yet I am still Japanese. This means I live at the borderlands of the two cultures, which allows for a certain double vision. As Doi (1973) points out about the beginning of his study of *amae*: "I had come to realize that something had changed in myself as a result of the 'cultural shock' I suffered when I first went to America. I came

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back to Japan with a new sensibility, and from then on the chief characteristic of

the Japanese in my eyes was something that, as *Kyogo*, the hero of Homecoming,

also felt—could best be expressed by the word *amae*" (p.17). An experience of

"culture shock" gives us a new understanding of our own culture as well as of

new culture. In this dissertation I use my insider/outsider-ness artfully and

consciously as an interviewing strategy, a way to raise research questions not

noticed by others, and create tension and to make meaning at the borders of two

cultures.

Organization of the Dissertation

Each of the chapters addresses a particular issue related to the pedagogy of

social-emotional development in Japanese preschool. The issues I deal with

overlap, but I try to divide them. Chapter 2 explores the lessons taught and

learned in Japanese preschools about how children should experience, present,

and respond to feelings. I focus on the feeling of *sabishiii* (loneliness). Why do

Japanese preschool educators draw so much attention to the feeling of *sabishii*

(loneliness)? I analyze the feeling of *sabishii* and two Japanese emic notions,

amae (expressions of dependency needs) and *omoiyari* (responding empathically

to expressions of *amae*), and suggest that *sabishii*, *amae*, and *omoiyari* form a

triad of emotional exchange, which although not unique to Japan or to the

Japanese preschool, have a particular cultural patterning and salience in Japan and

in the Japanese approach to the socialization of emotions in early childhood. In

Chapter 3, I re-analyze the fighting scenes in the Komatudani and Madoka videos

with literarily and metaphorically shifting my focus of attention from the children

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who perceived to be the key figures in the fights to the children on the periphery whom had not noticed as participating. I present a Japanese educational perspective to think about the development of the class as a community, which is quite different from individual-centric Western pedagogical perspective that give more attention to each child's development. Chapter 4 discusses the traditional Japanese childcare notion of *mimamoru.* How does a teacher do *mimamoru* and what does the teacher think about while doing *mimamoru*? In Chapter 5, I apply the cultural notion of *mimamoru* explored in Chapter 4 to the government's kindergarten education policy. The Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline contains few directives or practical suggestions for teachers. I examine how the government tries to support preschool educators through/with notion of *mimamoru*. In this chapter, I also suggest that the Japanese hands-off approach reflects a combination of structural features of Japanese early childhood education and implicit cultural beliefs and practices. Chapter 6 proposes that many of cultural practices that described in the previous chapters are also found at a Deaf Kindergarten Classroom. I argue that the presence of these same practices in these two very different kinds of Japanese preschools, serving very different population of students, with teachers who had very different forms of professional development provides further evidence for the power of implicit cultural beliefs and practices. In Chapter 7, the last chapter, I move to a higher level of abstraction and discuss some issues including implicit cultural notions of time, space, sight and the body that intercut the topics addressed in the previous chapters. I conclude by arguing there are shared patterns in Japanese education

that can be seen in preschool practices and policies and that are evidence of deeply embedded implicit cultural beliefs and practices.

Acknowledgement of Published Papers

Chapter 2

THE JAPANESE PRESCHOOL'S PEDAGOGY OF FEELING:

CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN'S

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction: Sad Fish and Lonely Carrots

In a preschool in Kyoto a teacher stands in front of her class of four-year-olds and hold up brightly colored sheets of origami paper: "We're going to make fish today. First we make a triangle. And then fold in both sides, just like when you make a tulip. Then fold the two end points in, like this. And one more fold, like this. Got it? Good! Now it looks like a fish. But it looks so sad and lonely (*sabishii*) without a mouth or eyes. What should we do? I'll take a marker, and draw an eye on my fish, like this."

At lunchtime, a teacher notices that many of the children have finished their meat and rice and dessert, but left their carrots untouched. Speaking to a boy in a theatrical voice loud enough for the whole class to hear, the teacher says " Poor Mister Carrot! You ate Mr. Hamburger, Mr. Rice, and Mr. Orange, but you haven't eaten any of Mr. Carrot. Don't you think he feels lonely (*sabishii*)?"

On one level, the teachers' actions here are easy to understand and seem to require no ethnographic explanation. In the first example the teacher encourages her students to add facial features to their paper fish; in the second, the teacher urges students to eat their vegetables. What is in need of explanation is why these teachers evoke such heavy emotion to achieve such banal goals. Why, for example, bring up loneliness to get a child to eat his vegetables or to get children

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to put facial features on their paper fish? In this chapter I will analyze the Mr. Carrot and the paper fish incidents alongside other activities involving emotion I have observed in Japanese preschools and use these analyses to construct a theory of the pedagogy of feelings and empathy in Japanese early childhood education.

Feelings and Emotions

A note on terminology: "Feeling (*kimochi*)" and "emotion (*kanjou*)" are close in meaning in both Japanese and English. The psychological and anthropological literatures both tend more often to use the term emotion than feeling, as in the technical expression "emotional regulation" used in psychology and in the titles of anthropological studies such as Jean Briggs' *Inuit Morality Play: The Emotional Education of a Three-Year-Old* (1999) and Catherine Lutz' *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll and Their Challenge to Western Theory* (1988). However, I use the word "feelings" rather than "emotions" in this chapter because preschool teachers in Japan (as in English speaking countries) speak more often of feelings (*kimochi*) than of emotions (*kanjou*) and in this sense "feeling" is the more emic term. Similarly, I locate the pedagogy of feelings within the context of the development of "social mindedness" (*shudan shugi*) and "social life" (*shakkai seikatsu*), rather than in terms of "interdependence" (*sougo izon-teki*) or "inter-cooperativeness" (*sougo kouchou-teki*) because the latter terms, which are not used by Japanese teachers, reflect a more academic psychological than an emic cultural construct (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Kitayama 1997).

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I have combined the terms "loneliness," "dependence," and "empathy" in this work to emphasize that emotions need to be understood, following de Rivera (1984) and Lutz (1998), not only or primarily as intrapsychic phenomena experienced by individuals, but as phenomena that are interpersonal and social and therefore cultural. As Lutz writes:

> The tendency to look at emotions in isolation from the social field has led to an emphasis on emotions as singular events situated within the individual rather than on emotional exchanges between individuals. Anger, for example, is examined as a response to a particular set of circumstances, but the equally important emotional response of others to that anger (and that emotion's subsequent transformation) is generally ignored (1988, p. 212).

Lutz explains how expressions of anger in Ifaluk society produce in others responses of anxiety and fear and expressions of happiness produce responses of excitement and jealousy:

> Ifaluk cultural logic elucidates how each emotion presupposes the other in the above pairs. These exchanges, which are more or less culturally stereotyped, are socially achieved scenarios, and they are culturally interpreted and learned. This view of emotions more adequately reflects the emotional flow of everyday social interaction (1988, p. 212).

Just so, as I will argue, in Japanese preschools for the expression of loneliness and dependence and responses of empathy.

Preschools as Sites of Enculturation

Since it is beginnings, one of psychological anthropology's core concerns has been to understand how young children come to have the habits of mind, emotions, and social skills valued by their culture or, to put if another way, how young Balinese children become Balinese, young Japanese children Japanese, and young French children recognizably and characteristically French. Most of the early studies of enculturation and of the learning and teaching of emotions were conducted not in schools but in homes, communal village areas, and town squares. This is because until recently (the last fifty years or so) most young children in Japan as in most other industrialized cultures spent most of the day not in preschools but being cared for by relatives, who were often themselves (older) children (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). The industrialization, urbanization, and changes in labor and family organization that came to Japan as to other countries in the 20th century led also to the development of systems of nursery schools and kindergartens. In contemporary Japan, nearly every child attends two or more years of preschool before entering primary school. The thesis of this chapter is that the preschool in Japan, as elsewhere, is a relatively new social institution, but one charged with the traditional enculturation task of turning young children into culturally appropriate members of their society. This means that preschools are key sites for the study of enculturation and preschool teachers are key agents of cultural transmission.

The Anatomy of Emotion

This chapter is intended to be a contribution to one domain of preschool teaching and learning, to a domain I call the pedagogy of feelings, by which I mean teachers' beliefs and practices about how best to help young children develop culturally appropriate ways of expressing and responding to emotions. My work here builds on psychological anthropological concepts developed by the Japanese psychoanalyst Takeo Doi, who is best known for his work on *amae*, a common Japanese work that means acting in a way that produces in others a desire to offer nurturance or help. In his 1973 book *The Anatomy of Dependence,* (*Amae no Kozo*) Doi suggests that *amae* is a key concept for understanding the Japanese psyche because it reflects the high value placed in Japan on expressions of vulnerability. In a 1994 article, "Japanese Preschools and the Pedagogy of Selfhood," Tobin argues that the Japanese preschool is a site for learning *amae* and for teaching young children to handle interpersonal relations. This chapter picks up that line of research, this time with a focus on the preschool as a site for the learning of the expression of emotions and of emotional responsiveness. This chapter also extends Doi's conceptualization of *amae* as a Japanese emic psychological and cultural concept by suggesting that *sabishii*, *amae,* and *omoiyari* (loneliness, dependence, and empathy) form a triad of emotional exchange, which, although not unique to Japan or to the Japanese preschool, have a particular cultural patterning and salience in Japan and in the Japanese approach to the socialization of emotions in early childhood.

A Day at Komatsudani Hoikuen

The key Japanese preschool is Komatsudani Hoikuen (day care center), a program on the grounds of a Buddhist temple in Kyoto that serves children from three months to six years old. The video focused on Morita-sensei's class of four-year-olds.

In this chapter, I provide a close reading of a series of critical incidents involving Nao-chan, the youngest and most recently enrolled child in Morita-sensei's class of four-year-olds, had an emotion-filled (but, Morita-sensei told me, not atypical) day. I focus on Nao because as the youngest and newest child in the class she attracted the most socializing behavior from her peers, behavior that in turn stimulated rich reflections from her teacher and in this way provided me with a route into understanding what I am calling the Japanese preschool's pedagogy of feeling.

In the beginning of the videotape we see Nao arrive at school with her mother and three-month-old brother. At the school gate when her mother says goodbye and attempts to leave, Nao protests and clings to her leg. A classmate, Maki, approaches and encourages Nao to come play with her. Eventually, they hold hands and walk together to the playground where they join other girls to play. A bit later, inside the classroom, Nao tries to pull a stuffed bear away from another girl, Reiko. The two girls tussle over the bear, their heads dangerously close to the corner of the piano. Morita calls from across the room, "Hold on. It's dangerous there." Leading the two girls by the hands away from the piano, Morita tells them to *junken* (to do "paper, rock, scissors") to settle their dispute. Reiko's

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scissors beat Nao's paper. Morita says to Nao, "We'll let Reiko put the bear away today, right." Nao defiantly says, "No!" Morita replies, firmly, "We did *junken*." Nao sits on the floor and sulks. Reiko and her twin sister and constant companion, Seiko, approach and tell her that she should not have tried to grab the bear away from them. Nao replies, "Seiko-chan and Reiko-chan are stupid." Seiko replies, "Well, it's your own fault. You put the bear down. That's why we took it." The origami paper fish making activity comes next.

During the free play time that follows, a tussle breaks out among the girls, as Nao, Seiko, and Reiko pull and tug on the teddy bear. With help from Maki and Reiko, Seiko eventually comes away with it. Nao tries to grab it away from Seiko, and Reiko intervenes, pulling on the back of Nao's dress. The three girls fall to the floor into a pile of twisting, pushing, and pulling bodies. From across the room, we hear Morita-sensei call out "Kora, Kora" (which has a meaning somewhere between "Hey!" and "Stop"), but she doesn't come over to break up the fight. Eventually, Seiko emerges from the pile with the bear, which she puts under her dress (making her appear pregnant) and then crawls under the table, where it will be harder for Nao to get at her. Seiko tells Nao, "Stop it. It's not yours, it's Seiko's." The girls discuss what to do. Maki suggests that Seiko should give the bear to Nao. Seiko pokes her head out from under the table and Nao says to her, "Give it to me." Seiko, Maki, and Reiko discuss what to do. Seiko says to Yoko, "You should scold her!" Reiko admonishes Nao, "That's bad! You can't just grab the bear away like that!" Nao responds, "But I had it first." Maki replies, "But then you put it down, so your turn was over." Nao, pouting, is led away to

the other side of the room by Seiko, who says to her: "You can't do that. Do you understand? Promise?" Linking little fingers with Nao, the two girls swing their arms back and forth as they sing, "Keep this promise, or swallow a thousand needles." Seiko then puts her arm around Nao's shoulders and says to Nao, "Understand? Good."

Morita-sensei, who throughout this altercation has been walking back and forth near the fighting girls, ignoring their altercation as she cleans up the morning fishing materials, then announces that it is time to clean up for lunch. Seiko, her arm around Nao, rubs her back and leads her to the line of children forming in the doorway. Morita-sensei comes to the front of the line and tells them they can go, and the children hurry down the stairs, and out the side door, to the dining room for lunch.

The afternoon was less eventful for Nao and her comrades. After lunch came a nap, a story, and free play. The day ended with singing, and then outdoor play as the children wait to be picked up. At about five, Nao's mother arrives at the school with Nao's baby brother. Nao gives her mother a hug, but in no hurry to go home, plays a bit longer with friends while her mother chats with other parents.

The Cultural Salience of Loneliness

The Japanese word used by the teachers in the fish and carrot examples is "*sabishii*," which carries a meaning close to the English word "lonely," but with stronger sense of being forlorn or desolate. In the contexts above, perhaps the best translation would be "lonely (or left out) and therefore sad." The carrot is lonely

and therefore sad because he has been passed over and left alone on the plate, and not been allowed to join his lunch compatriots, the hamburger, rice, and orange in being eaten.

To most U.S. early childhood educators who have watched the Komatsudani video, this scenario seems like an odd way to encourage a child to eat his vegetables. This is one of those situations where insider informants are unable to offer a profound explanation because the action in question is so ordinary. Japanese early childhood educators say that this approach to get children to eat is commonly used in preschools and in homes, but that it carries no special or deep meaning. My explanation would be that being a member of the group is so highly valued in Japanese culture in general and in preschool pedagogy in particular that missing out on the opportunity of being consumed alongside one's comrades makes one an object of pity and concern, even if you are a carrot and your comrades other inanimate objects. The implicit logic here is that children will accept the fanciful premise that items of food have feelings, they will empathize with the neglected, sad carrot, and eat him in an act of sympathy that will allow him to rejoin his old lunch box companions. Getting young children to comply by appealing for consideration of the feelings of food as well as people has been described as a strategy used by Japanese parents in studies by Conroy et al. 1980 and by Hess et al. 1986). A Japanese researcher told me that she encourages her one-year-old to nurse by saying "You've eaten from Mrs. Left Breast. How about Mrs. Right Breast. Don't you think she's feeling sad?" My study shows that this

strategy reflects a cultural logic employed by preschool teachers as well as parents.

The paper fish that lacks facial features is lonely in a somewhat different sense of being not abandoned but incomplete and therefore sad. Again, Morita and other Japanese early childhood educators I interviewed about the videotape saw no special significance in her comment about the fish being lonely because it lacked an eye. My interpretation is that the use of *sabishii* here to describe the fish should be understood as reflecting Japanese aesthetic as well as psychological constructs. The root of *sabishii* is *sabi*, which means "alone" and which is used in Japanese aesthetic discourse, usually coupled with the word *wabi,* to refer to an intense, highly valued mood of austerity, simplicity, longing, and sadness evoked in or by a work of art. The term *wabi* originally referred to "the misery of living alone in nature." Like the English word "hermit," this loneliness is not viewed as entirely negative, and is associated with a morally admirable aestheticism found in Zen, which embraces simplicity and rejects materialism. As Andrew Juniper writes, "if an object or expression can bring about, within us, a sense of serene melancholy and a spiritual longing, then that object could be said to be *wabi sabi* (2003, p. 11)." Jamie Hubbard (2008) writes, "Both of these expressions [*wabi* and *sabi*] can be understood to refer to a sense of the smallness or finite-ness of the individual in the face of the infinite." Like *wabi-sabi, sabishii* should be understood as a sad emotion, but one that is highly valued, cultivated, and savored. Morita's use of the word *sabishii* describes not only the feeling state of the eyeless fish, but also of the person who gazes sympathetically on this work of

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(unfinished) art. This doubling of feeling, this identification of an observed object with the self, is the root of the meaning of empathy, which was an aesthetic term before it became a psychological one. Morita points out to the children that the fish without eyes produces a sense of loneliness in those who view it, loneliness that can be reduced by adding an eye and making the fish more complete.

Amae

Acting lonely or sad elicits the desire in others to help. In this sense, I can think of showing one's sadness or loneliness to others as expressions of *amae*. Nao's clinging to her mother's leg when she's dropped off at school and her daily routine of focusing on possession of the teddy bear and then whining when she loses control of it can be read as expressions of a babyishness that Doi would categorize as immature expressions of *amae*. Nao wants to be a member of the group of girls, but has a limited repertoire of ways to engage them. She appeals for inclusion by displaying *amae* in an immature form that is easily read by the older girls. Standing at the gate each morning clinging to her mother's leg and crying can be read as a show of forlornness and *amae* intended not just for her mother (who Nao knows will soon leave despite her protestations) but also or primarily for her teacher and especially for her classmates, whose attention and acceptance she craves. Nao's determination to have control of the teddy bear can be read similarly as an expression of *amae* that communicates to the other girls Nao's immaturity, loneliness, and desire for connection.

Nao's whiny and aggressive expressions of *amae* and the other girls sometimes gentle and sometimes harsh responses are immature, or, to use the

preferred term of Japanese early childhood educators, *kodomo-rashii,* which literally means "childlike." It could be said that such childlike expressions of *amae* are *amae* in its purest form. The quintessential expression of *amae* is a not quite yet talking or walking infant reaching her arms in the air as a request to be picked up. Drawing on psychoanalytic theories of the development of the self and object relations, Doi suggests that infants under six months old are not usually described as doing *amae* because they do not yet have a sense of themselves as separate and therefore do not yet experience the existential loneliness and the conscious desire for the other that are the core motivation that drives *amae* and that makes it a key force in binding together society. The primary developmental lesson to be learned in the first few years of life in Japan is not independence, but how to overcome one's essential, existential separation and loneliness through interdependency. *Amae,* the ability to make people want to care for you, is a key component of interdependency and expressions of loneliness and sadness are key components of *amae.* Following De Rivera's taxonomy of emotions, I can conceptualize the English-language equivalent of the feeling state of *amae* as "longing" (De Rivera, 1984, p.127).

In their study "Culture, Emotion, and Well Being: Good Feelings in Japan and the United States," Kitayama, Markus, and Kurokawa (2000, p.100) present a taxonomy of Japanese emotions that includes a section they call "*amae*-related emotions." Under this heading they include *tanomi*, which they translate as "feel like relying on others" and *sugari* ("feel like leaning on others"). I would add *sabishii* to this of *amae*-related emotions list. They also list *kanashii* (sadness) as

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a key emotion, but they do not consider this an "*amae*-related emotion." I concur, in that sadness can be felt and expressed for many reasons, some of them not related to longing for connection to others, whereas expressions of loneliness, like *amae*, carry a sense of being incomplete and of appealing for help and connection.

Loneliness is a valued emotion in Japan because it is a key component of sociality. The development of sociality, in turn, is a central goal of the Japanese preschool curriculum, which emphasizes the cultivation in young children of social mindedness (*shudan shugi*) and group-living skills (*shakkai seikatsu).* Loneliness is produced by a desire for connection to others, and leads to seeking companionship and membership in a group. It is Nao's loneliness that leads to her expressions of *amae* that in turn work to bring her into connection with the group of girls. It for these reasons that Morita views Nao's loneliness and sadness as positive emotions and her expressions of *amae*, no matter how immaturely expressed, as prosocial.

Omoiyari

Amae, which is an expression of dependency, can only function in an interpersonal interaction when it's reciprocal, *omoiyari*--the ability and willingness to respond to the needs of others--is also present. There is a parallel here with socio-biological theories on the evolution of eliciting and caretaking behaviors in animals. As Lorenz (1997) argued in his cross-species studies of cuteness, an infantile appearance (the large head to body ratio, round face, small nose, big forehead characteristic of puppies, kittens, and hatchlings as well as of human infants) and helpless behaviors (such as a baby bird's cries and wide open,

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up-turned mouth) are powerful eliciting or releasing factors which have the effect of producing caretaking behaviors in others. Following this line of reasoning, *amae* can be thought of as a form of performing helplessness and *omoiyari* as a form of caretaking elicited by *amae*. Applying this logic to the videotape of a day at Komatsudani, I can suggest not that the other girls are necessarily consciously aware of Nao's loneliness but that Nao's displays of *amae* elicit caretaking responses in the other girls.

Takie Lebra defines *omoiyari* as "the ability and willingness to feel what others are feeling, to vicariously experience the pleasure and pain that they are undergoing, and to help them satisfy their wishes" (1976, p. 38). Lebra, who views *omoiyari* as a key component of what she calls "social preoccupation" and "interactional relativism," emphasizes the cultural value placed in Japan on attending to and even anticipating the needs and feelings of others. In other words, to be a good person in Japan requires putting a lot of time and energy into figuring out what others are feeling and thinking. Hidetada Shimizu, agreeing with Lebra's definition, adds that *omoiyari* is "cultural common sense" and that it is part of a cultural script available to all (well socialized) Japanese people (2000, p. 4).

Some dictionaries translate *omoiyari* as "consideration." In some contexts, this is a good translation, as "considerate," like *omoiyari*, suggests a combination of thought and action. To be considerate means to be sensitive to the feelings of another and to act accordingly. But I prefer to translate *omoiyari* as "empathy" because this conveys more of the emotional depth of the term and better connects

with the literature on the development of sociality in young children. However, a disadvantage of empathy as a definition is that, unlike *omoiyari*, which is an everyday expression in Japanese, empathy is a more technical term, a neologism coined only about a century ago. From the Greek for "feeling-in," empathy was coined by the U.S. psychologist Edward Titchener (1909; 1915), as a translation of the German *Einfühlung*, which was itself a neologism created in Germany in the latter part of the 19th century in the context of Kantian views of aesthetics. Titchener defined empathy as feeling or experiencing the emotional state of another person or the feeling evoked by a work of art, in contrast to the older and more common term "sympathy," which emphasizes compassion and commiseration for the suffering of another person without necessarily knowing what he is feeling. *Omoiyari* combines elements of empathy and sympathy--the verb *omou*, which is the root of *omoiyari*, implies both heart and mind, with a meaning in between the English verbs "to think" and "to feel."

Because *omoiyari* is so highly culturally valued, the development of *omoiyari* is a central goal of Japanese child rearing and early childhood education (Kojima 1986; Olson, Kashiwagi, & Crystal 2001). Parents and teachers frequently use the word *omoiyari* in speaking to young children is such phrases as "It is important to become a person who can sympathize with others' feelings," and "Your behavior lacks *omoiyari*." In the National Kindergarten Guidelines, the first item listed is "*Omoiyari-no kokoro-wo taisetu-ni shimashoo*" ("Let's think about the importance of *omoiyari*"). A survey used in the original *Preschool in Three Cultures* study (Tobin et al. 1989) showed that Japanese early childhood

educators rated the item "sympathy/empathy/ concern for others" as the most important thing for children to learn in preschool.

In the Japanese anthropological and psychological literature, there are discussions of the cultural centrality of the concepts of *amae* and of *omoiyari*, but little or no discussion of the connection between the two or how both are linked to feelings and expressions of loneliness. I suggest that *amae* and *omoiyari* should be viewed as reciprocally related. There can be no *amae* without the expectation of *omoiyari* and no *omoiyari* without a perceived need for *amae* any more than an economy could have buying without selling. If one does *amaeru* (acts in a way intended to solicit help or attention from an other) and the other is not able or willing to respond to this appeal, then the *amae* loses its meaning, like the sound of the tree falling in the proverbial forest. There are expressions of longing and dependence that fail to find an empathetic response and empathetic gestures offered that are unwanted and even resented (there is a word for this in Japanese—*osekai,* which means to offer unwanted assistance). But the existence of failures or breakdowns in the circuit that connects *amae* to *omoiyari* is the exception that proves the rule of their reciprocal connection.

Moreover, a coparticipant in an emotion-charged interaction who fails to reciprocate expressions of loneliness or dependence with an empathic response may be criticized for this failure or, in the case of young children in preschool, not directly criticized but encouraged by teachers to be more empathetic. Often, in situations in Japanese preschools where there is a breakdown in the circuit of loneliness, dependence, and empathy, a teacher's intervention will be directed not

just or primarily, at the non-empathetic respondent, but also at the child who has expressed neediness, but insufficiently clearly or strongly to elicit the desired response. Catherine Lewis, for example, presents the example of a fight between two five-year-old boys that the teacher responded to, not by breaking up the fight, but instead by encouraging the boy who was losing the fight to cry, rather than to attempt to suppress his tears and thereby obscure his feelings (Lewis, 1984, p. 78).

A Curriculum of *Omoiyari*

Based largely on Piaget's description of young children as egocentric (1926; 1967) and psychoanalytic understandings of the "birth of the self" (Bettelheim 1972; Mahler et. al. 1975) as a process of overcoming primary narcissism, developmental psychologists used to believe that young children are incapable of empathy and of true altruism (for a review, see Thompson 1987, p. 120-122). But more recent work indicates that empathy begins much earlier than Piaget and the psychoanalysts of childhood suggested. Studies by Borke (1971) and others show that by three years old most children can identify distress in another person and may offer assistance. As Thompson concludes: "The weight of the evidence suggests that a capacity for empathy develops by the middle of the second year (1987, p.135). However, the evidence also suggests that the ability to read emotions in others and to respond empathetically follows a developmental sequence. A two-year-old is most likely to offer assistance based on her understanding of her own needs rather than the needs of the person in distress. For example, she may offer her crying mother her bottle or her teddy bear. Such

examples have been interpreted to suggest that the toddler may want to help, but

lacks knowledge, skills, and insights older children have into appropriate helping

behavior (Barnett et al. 1982). But I would point out that the two-year-old's offer

of her bottle to her mother is likely to function as an effective empathetic gesture

despite or even because of its egocentric character —I suspect that most mothers

experiencing a moment of sadness would take their toddler's offer of her bottle as

an act of empathy and be moved and perhaps even cheered up. However, if the

same child at age six was still offering her mother her favorite playthings to cheer

her up, I suspect that the gesture would be less effective and be read as somewhat

less empathetic. Which is to come back to the point that there is a developmental

trajectory of empathy.

This line of research leads to the question of whether empathy can be

taught to young children. The Japanese answer to this question is most often

"Yes," but not by teaching it directly. In the videotapes I do see some examples of

teachers teaching empathy directly, mostly in the form of introducing and

reinforcing a vocabulary of emotions, as in the teacher's discussion with the

children of the fish that is sad because it lacks eyes. Alongside such direct

approaches, Japanese preschool teachers support the development of empathy in

young children by providing them with multiple opportunities to experience social

complexity and to interact to work out authentic (as opposed to teacher posed)

social and emotional dilemmas with a minimum of adult mediation. Empathy has

three major aspects: intuitive emotional understanding of others, sympathy, and

pro-social behavior. In other words, pro-social behavior requires the ability to

read the emotions of another, to feel concern, and then to do something effective about it. In the Komatsudani videotape, I see examples of children working on all three of these aspects of empathy.

The responses of Maki and the other girls to Nao's expressions of loneliness can be understood as expressions of *omoiyari*. Maki's helping Nao to separate from her mother at the school gate by taking her hand and encouraging her to come play clearly qualifies as empathy: Maki accurately identifies or reads Nao's loneliness and expression of *amae*, feels sorry for her, and then intervenes in an effective way. I suggest that the older girls' responses to Nao's refusal to share the teddy bear also qualify as acts of empathy, even if the form of these responses are harsh and seemingly unsympathetic. Letting Nao have the bear rather than taking it away from her might seem on the surface like a more empathetic response. But Morita explains that Nao's real desire is not for the bear; it is for inclusion in the social life of the older girls. As soon as it ceases to be a source of struggle, Nao and her classmates lose interest in the bear, which is, after all, just a stuffed animal. If the older girls were to allow Nao to have the teddy bear, this would be an act of sympathy, but not empathy, as it would be a misreading of Nao's real desire for inclusion. Instead of letting her have the bear, the older girls take it from her when they judge that it is not her turn to have it and then use these moments to chastise and correct her. These responses may look harsh to adults, but they are appropriate and effective responses to Nao's desire to be included in the social life of the older girls. If what is being felt is loneliness

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and what is needed is attention, then the children's responses are effective and appropriate.

A Pedagogy of Restraint

Morita-sensei scaffolds the girls' interactions by artfully not-intervening and when she does intervene, doing so strategically and with restraint. Morita described her strategic non-intervention in the children's disputes using the phrases *mimamoru* (watching and waiting) and *machi no hoiku* (supporting child development through waiting). Not intervening is not the absence of acting—it is an action, one that requires restraint and judgment. I can say that Morita's non-intervention is itself an act of empathy—to break up the fight would be to misread Nao's desire and the girls' response and to give Nao and the other girls something they don't want. If a young child offering her crying mother her doll constitutes well intended sympathy without true empathetic understanding of the other's needs, so, too, do adults imposing their adult-centric solutions on children's disputes.

I can also suggest that Morita's hesitancy to intervene in the children's disputes reflects a cultural pedagogical belief that lessons in emotional development and social skills are better learned from interacting with peers than from didactic instruction or from adult-child dyadic interactions (Lewis, 1984). The large class size and high student-teacher ratios of the Japanese preschool classroom preclude the teacher giving frequent one-on-one attention to individual students. Indeed, Tobin, et al (1987) have argued that this is part of the cultural rationale for keeping the student-teacher ratios high. If the ratios were lower and

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class-size smaller, teachers would be more tempted to intervene and as a result students would miss out on opportunities to interact with peers in emotion-filled scenarios without adult mediation.

Morita-sensei in fact does intervene in the girl's disputes, but subtly. When they are tussling over the bear near the piano early in the day she calls out, "It's dangerous!" And during the big fight, just at the moment that the older girls wrest the bear from Nao's grip and restrain her, Morita calls out from across the room "Kora, Kora," (Hey!). When the girls hear her call, the nature of the interaction shifts, with the older girls suddenly becoming less physically aggressive and instead adopting a more teacherly stance towards Nao, as they proceed to educate her on rules of classroom etiquette for turn-taking with toys.

The Sword and the Chrysthanemum

Some readers of earlier drafts of this paper raised the possibility that the older girls' response to Nao is less empathetic than aggressive and hierarchical. One reader suggested that the tape has captured an example not of empathy but of bullying. Another reader urged me to consider the possibility that the lesson the older girls are teaching Nao is that she must take her turn at the bottom of their status hierarchy and show them deference. I reject the characterization of this interaction as Nao being the victim of bullying because this is not how Morita-sensei and the other Japanese educators who watched video understand it and also because my observations of the children in Morita's classroom during the week of videotaping made it clear that Nao is usually (but not always) the instigator of the fights and moreover that the outcome of the fights is always reconciliation and not

exclusion. However, although I disagree with the suggestion that Nao is a victim and although I insist that actions of both Nao and the other girls are pro-social and that they are instances of what I am calling the pedagogy of feeling and empathy, I acknowledge the salience of hierarchy and the role of age differences in the exchange of expressions of loneliness and empathy.

The first point I would make is that I should avoid sentimentalizing the workings of *amae* and *omoiyari* by leaving out considerations of power in young children's social interactions in Japanese preschools (Davies & Kasama, 2004). The older girls are not only responding to Nao's expressions of neediness and her appeals to be included in the group; they are enacting (and thereby teaching Nao) principles of hierarchy and verticality that are core features of Japanese social organization. I should avoid putting a Western spin on this observation, and seeing the verticality of the interaction as something that is inherently unfair or mean-spirited. In Japanese social interactions in preschools and other sites the reciprocal exchange of *amae* and *omoiyari*, of emotional neediness and empathetic response, while possible among age mates, finds it most comfortable and ideal form within hierarchical relationships. Indeed, it can sometimes be difficult for Japanese social relations to begin in situations where seniority is unclear, such as meetings of new acquaintances prior to the exchange of business cards. The objective fact of Nao being the youngest and newest class member coupled with the subjective sense that she is also the neediest and least mature combine to create a context in which she can display and perform loneliness and sadness and frustration and the other girls can respond aggressively, didactically,

and empathetically. The power and status inequality of Nao and the other girls potentiates rather than undermines the possibility for an exchange of feeling. With time, the power and status difference recedes and Nao becomes a peer group member, who is as likely to be on the giving as receiving end of expressions of sadness and empathy.

In most of the examples in this chapter the interactions between the one feeling lonely and the ones responding empathetically have been vertical, as older children respond empathetically to the needs and feelings of younger ones. Vertical relationships are clearly marked in Japanese society. Younger children learn to refer to non-related older children as "big brother" and "big sister" and in schools and in businesses, relationships are clearly marked as *sempai* (more senior) and *kohai* (more junior). But this verticality does not mean that the junior member of the dyad is always receiving and the senior member giving. Instead, in both vertical and peer-to-peer relationships, the flow of *amae* and *omoiyari* should be reciprocal. I also want to emphasize that in the reciprocal exchange of *amae* and *omoiyari,* both sides benefit. Taking care of and responding empathetically to the needs of another is thought of in Japan as just as satisfying and pleasurable as being cared for and receiving empathetic support. *Omoiyari* is not selflessness—it is social engagement.

Conclusion

A key pedagogical goal of Japanese preschool teachers is to provide young children with opportunities to develop *omoiyari* (empathy), which requires the ability to be aware of the unverbalized or awkwardly expressed feelings of

others. All feelings are not of equal value. Within the Japanese preschool's pedagogy of feeling, among the most highly valued feeling are *sabishii* (loneliness), *amae* (dependence) and *omoiyari* (empathy). *Sabishii or* loneliness is emphasized much more than, for example, anger or embarrassment, because this feeling is seen to provoke responses of *omoiyari* and to fuel the desire for sociality, which are core curricular goals of the Japanese preschool. Loneliness and sociality are reciprocally connected: Feeling lonely motivates people to seek the company of others. Expressions of loneliness, in turn, provoke the empathic response of inviting the lonely person to join the group. Shared experiences of talking about and both directly and vicariously experiencing loneliness provide a sense of intersubjectivity that strengthens group ties.

Children need to learn to express their loneliness and other needs in terms of *amaeru*, which means to act in a way that invites empathic, caring responses. If you feel lonely but do not in any way show it, or if you need help but hide your helplessness, you preclude the possibility of an empathic, pro-social response from others. Learning to express *amae* is therefore a crucial developmental task for young children. Children need in preschool to have ample opportunities to experience both *amae* and *omoiyari*, that is, opportunities to express their needs, to have their needs responded to by teachers and peers, and to respond to the needs of others.

My work here follows, supports, and extends the line of research conducted by psychological anthropologists that argues that emotions need to be understood as contextual and relational (Luz, 1988; Bender et al, 2007). Japanese

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preschool teachers' understandings of how best to support the development of appropriate displays of emotion in young children are contextual both in the sense of being culturally patterned and also in the sense of being cultural practices characteristic of Japanese preschool settings and of the mostly implicit professional beliefs and practices of Japanese preschool teachers. The understandings of emotions I have described and analyzed in this chapter are relational both in the sense of conceptualizing feelings as interpersonal and intersubjective rather than only or primarily as intrapsychic processes and also in the sense of viewing the experience and expression of feelings as being not discrete, isolated phenomena but instead as tried together in sequences of emotional expression and response, as I have suggested is the case for Japanese preschool's pedagogy that focuses on the triad of *sabishii*, *amae*, and *omoiyari* (loneliness, interdependence, and empathy).

Chapter 3

THE JAPANESE PRESCHOOL'S PEDAGOGY OF PERIPHERAL

PARTICIPATION

Introduction

In this chapter I present a re-analysis of these scenes of fighting in

Japanese preschools. This re-analysis has required me to refocus my attention,

both metaphorically and literally, from those fighting and mediating in the center

of the frame to those in the surrounding gallery of peripherally participating

observers. I present a Japanese emic perspective, featuring the words and

concepts used by Japanese practitioners to explain their beliefs and practices

concerning children who play a peripheral role in fights. The beliefs that underlie

these practices are for the most implicit rather than explicit (Tobin et al. 2009,

p.19). They are not systematically taught in teacher preparation programs,

discussed in education textbooks, or prescribed in national guidelines for

kindergarten. And yet these beliefs are widely shared, components of what

Anderson-Levitt (2002), calls a "national culture of teaching," what Bruner calls a

"folk pedagogy" defined as "taken-for-granted practices that emerge from

embedded cultural beliefs about how children learn and how teachers should

teach" (Bruner, 1996, p. 46); what Wierzbicka (1996) calls a "cultural grammar,"

and what Bruce Fuller (2007) refers to, following Geertz (1983) and D'Andrade

(1995), as "cultural models," which he defines as "parent's and teacher's tacit

understandings of how things should work" (2007, p. 74). I also want to make

clear at the onset that I agree with Shimizu's distinction between what he calls

"semantic and pragmatic" dimensions of emotions characteristic of a culture and the subjectively experienced versions of these emotions that are much more difficult to access and study (2000, p. 225). In this chapter which is based on analyses of videotaped scenes in a classroom and teachers reflections on these scenes I am concerned primarily with the teachers' cultural discourses of emotion rather than the children's culturally patterned lived experiences of emotions, although by necessity in my analysis I touch on both and bring them together.

I read this Japanese emic perspective alongside and, in some cases, against theories from the anthropological, developmental psychological, and sociological theories of legitimate peripheral participation, observational learning, social learning, self-regulation, and panopticism. I conclude with some implications for what this Japanese approach might offer for best practice beyond Japan.

Fight at Komatsudani Hoikuen and Madoka Youchien

Nao-chan is the youngest and most recently enrolled girl in the four-year-old class at Komatsudani Hoikuen. During a period of free play before lunch, an argument breaks out among Nao, Seiko, and Reiko. Maki hovers near by, at first watching the fighting among the girls (Figure 9) and then getting a bit involved, putting in her hand for a moment when the three girls are pulling and tugging on a teddy bear (Figure 10). Maki then steps back and watches when the girls fall in a pile on the floor, fighting over the bear (Figure 11). Nao, having lost control of the teddy bear, starts to cry. Maki goes over to Nao, touches her comfortingly (Figure 12), and then approaches Seiko to talk. Yoko (on the right side of the frame in Figure 13, in a yellow dress) has been watching Nao's crying. As Seiko

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and Reiko enter into a discussion with Nao, Yoko hovers on the edge of the discussion (Figure 14). Reiko then says to Yoko, "You should scold her" and Yoko says something to Nao (Figure 15). As Yoko is addressing Nao, Toshi steps into the frame (Figure 16), watches and listens for a bit, and then puts his hand on Nao's back (Figure 17). As fight concludes with Nao and Seiko locking little fingers and singing a song about being friends ("Keep this promise or swallow a thousand needles…" another girl, Mina, approaches and stands nearby (Figure 18).

Figure 9. Maki is watching

Figure 10. Maki reaches in

Figure 11. Maki steps back

Figure 12. Maki gives her hand in comfort

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Figure 13. Yoko approaches Nao

Figure 14. Yoko looks on.

Figure 15. Yoko gets involved.

Figure 16. Toshi approaches

Figure 17. Toshi watches

Figure 18. The Promise Song

A second event takes place in Madoka Yochien, a private kindergarten in Tokyo that serves children from three- to six-years-old. In Kaizuka-sensei's class of four-year-olds, at the end of the school day the students change back to the uniform they wear going and coming to school. In the video, as the children are changing, we see Nobu, in tears, approach Kaizuka-sensei and say, "Yusuke pulled my hair." Kaizuka-sensei gathers the two boys around her and squats between them to mediate their dispute. As soon as Kaizuka-sensei comes to the two boys, a girl and boy close by begin watching their interaction while changing their clothes (Figure 19). While Kaizuka-sensei keeps talking, several girls around them are watching. Another children watch them as well (Figures 20 through 26). Kaizuka-sensei's intervention continues and some of the children finish changing their clothes. When Kaizuka-sensei mentions, "God sees everything you do," three children are around them (Figure 27). One boy imitates what Kaizuka-sensei is doing. His hand is almost reaching his friend's head.

Figure 19. The interaction begins

Figure 20. Children are watching

Figure 21. More onlooking

Figure 22. The gaze of the onlookers

Figure 23. Seated girl looks on intently

Figure 24. More girls watching

Figure 25. Onlookers reach out   *Figure 26*. Watching closely

Figure 27. "God sees everything you do."

Fighting as Performance

When Yoshizawa-sensei, the former director of Komatsudani Kyoto, watched the scene of the girls fighting over the teddy bear, he said, "It takes a real professional teacher to tell the difference between a real fight and rough play." Yoshizawa credits Morita-sensei as having the experience and wisdom to recognize that Nao and the other girls were engaged in rough play, rather than in a

fight with intent to hurt each other, and he suggests that this awareness allows Morita-sensei to follow a strategy of non-intervention. Many Japanese teachers who watched this scene, like Yoshizawa-sensei used the word "playing" rather than "fighting" to describe the girls' interaction. One of the teachers commented: "Basically they are *jareau* (play fighting)." *Jareau* is most often used for describing the way puppies and kittens engage in mock fights as a way of playing, engaging, and preparing for adulthood. Other teachers described the fighting as *kodomorashii* (childish), a term in Japan that is usually used positively, to refer to behavior that is innocent, cute, and natural for young children. Another teacher commented: "The girls don't really want the bear. They are just wondering how Nao will react if they take the bear from her. Will she cry? Or will she get angry? Or just be upset?"

These and other comments suggest that the children are not so much fighting as playing at fighting and this play has a performative dimension, a dimension highlighted by Director Kumagai's use of the word gyarari to describe the children watching on the periphery. The children watching are the play's audience and the fighting children the actors. Just as a play needs an audience, such fights need a gallery. In both the Komatsudani and Madoka fight scenes, the teachers do not tell the children on the periphery to move away, suggesting that they value the participation of the gyarari. Japanese early childhood educators' comments on these scenes suggest that the role of the gyarari in such fights is complex and multiple, and that being a member of such a gallery is both a

valuable learning opportunity for the children watching as well as a form of social control for the children fighting.

Sympathetic Identification and Legitimate Peripheral Participation

The word gallery might seem to suggest that those watching are passive, but this is not how the Japanese educators I interviewed described the gyarari that gathered around the fights in the videos. Several teachers emphasized the distinction between active and passive watching by making a distinction between being a member of a gyarari, on one hand and being a *yajiuma* (onlooker) or *boukansya* (bystander) on the other (Akiba, 2004; Morita & Kiyonaga, 1996). The word *yajiuma* is most often used for describing people's behavior at sites of accidents. For instance, people who gather around a car accident out of curiosity and speculate about what happened and who was at fault are called *yajiuma,* which is sometimes translated into English as "rubbernecker." The word is derogatory, suggesting that those gathering around are motivated not by genuine concern but only by curiosity and a desire for vicarious thrills. One teacher said about the watching children in the video: "They look kind of like yajiuma, but not really, because they are worried." It is their appearance of being worried, suggesting empathy, which makes them legitimate peripheral participants, rather than mere onlookers. *Boukansya* (bystander) is a word used in Japan mostly in social psychology, as in the technical term "bystander effect." It is used to refer to people who watch with no intent to be participants. This term, like *yajiuma*, was used by teachers to distinguish illegitimate from legitimate participation, as in the comment of a teacher in Tokyo who said: "Those watching the children involved

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in the fight are not *boukansya* (bystanders). They are people concerned about their friends; they are *all* participants."

As in attending a play, the gyarari that gather around these fight scenes are potentially both moved and edified by their viewing. Japanese educators emphasized that it is not only the children directly involved who learn from fights and their resolution, but also the children watching, through observational learning and sympathetic identification. Japanese preschool teachers often used the words *kimochi* (feelings), *doujou* (sympathy, compassion), and *omoiyari* (empathy) to describe the gyarari children's experience of watching their classmates engaged in emotionally intense interactions. One teacher said, "Sympathizing with others is important." The experience of the gyarari therefore can be conceived as a form of vicarious participation, in which the observing children feel (or at least attempt to feel) what is being experienced by a classmate.

The Japanese teachers' practices seen in fighting scenes in the video, as well as their and other Japanese educators' reflections on these scenes, are largely consistent with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of "legitimate peripheral participation," and with the related concepts of "observational learning" and "intent participation." Rogoff and her colleagues describe intent participation as "keenly observing and listening in anticipation of or in the process of engaging in an endeavor" (2003, p. 176). Gaskins and Paradise write that "Observational learning typically occurs in familiar contexts in which one person performs an activity while another person, who knows less, watches them do it" (2009, p. 85). Lave and Wenger define legitimate peripheral participation as:

a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artefacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a socio-cultural practice. This social process, includes, indeed it subsumes, the learning of knowledgeable skills (1991, p. 29).

The Japanese practices and beliefs I have presented here are unlike most descriptions of peripheral participation and observational learning in the literature in several key ways. First, the learning here is not, as in most of the studies of peripheral participation and observational learning, of a cognitive skill or a trade, but instead of a social skill and of an emotional disposition. The children are learning, through observing and sympathetic identification, how to feel, what to do with their feelings, and how to behave as a member of a community. Such learning in the domains of emotions and sociality is under-discussed in the peripheral participation literature, which emphasizes the cognitive and skill domains, but well described in the cultural and psychological anthropological literature on acculturation (e.g., by Briggs, 1999; Hayashi et al, 2009) and in some conceptualizations of observational learning. For example, Gaskins and Paradise in their review of "Learning Through Observation in Daily Life" write that:

Many rules about emotions must be learned, including how and when to express emotions and how they are managed, labeled, and interpreted. These rules can be observed by attending to people's facial expressions, body language, speech and other audible expressions of emotion, and

actions directed toward others and the physical environment (2009, p. 108)

Gaskins and Paradise also suggest that children learn:

culturally structured rules about social behavior and social roles, in large

part by observing the interactions that go on around them. . . .They can

also observe the consequences of certain social acts in their particular

social worlds—what Bandura (1977) called *vicarious reinforcement*—by

observing others who share a social category with them and are seen

therefore to be "like me" (e.g., gender, age, race, or class) (2009, p. 108).

This points to a second key difference between the gyarari situations of

peer learning I have presented in this chapter and Lave and Wenger's notion of

legitimate peripheral participation and Rogoff and her collaborators' notion of

intent participation, which emphasize learning in hierarchical rather than peer

contexts and most often describing those observing and being observed as

"newcomers and old-timers" or as "masters and apprentices." I am not suggesting

that such hierarchical forms of peripheral participation are not important in Japan,

well known for its rich traditions of apprenticeship learning in the arts, or that

hierarchical learning is a form of peripheral participation not found in Japanese

preschools. Both the old and new Preschool in Three Cultures books describe the

importance teachers at Komatsudani Hoiken and other Japanese preschools give

to the benefits of mixed-age learning (*tate-wari kyōiku)* for both the younger and

older children (Tobin et al. 1989; Tobin et al. 2009; Ben-Ari, 1996). But

alongside the value placed on newcomers learning from old-timers, in Japanese

preschools there is a great emphasis placed on the value and importance of

learning through peer relationships. "Peer" is a relative term. Even in classes of children of similar ages, there are differences of age and experience. Nao-chan is the youngest and newest child in her class, and her teacher suggested this played a role in the girls' behaviors. But the underlying logic Morita-sensei and other Japanese teachers used to explain the value of teachers' non-intervention in order to allow the children to experience fighting and emotions, both directly and vicariously, was that of the children interacting as a community of peers.

The third important distinction I want to emphasize and that is the focus of the section that follows is that, whereas most of Lave and Wenger's examples are of people learning as individuals, the gyarari situations emphasize group learning and group experience.

None of these points I am making here are inherently inconsistent with the conceptualizations of Lave and Wenger of legitimate peripheral participation, of Gaskin and Paradise of observational learning, and of Rogoff et al's of intent participation, all of which implicitly are concerned with social as well as cognitive learning, in that peripheral participation and intent participation function to help individuals become full, appropriate, contributing members of a community. My argument is that the Japanese emic view can contribute to a widening of the concepts of peripheral participation and intent participation, with a greater and more explicit emphasis on emotion and on learning with and from peers, and on peripherally participating as a group.

Embodied Learning

In his 1996 article on nap time in Japanese nursery schools, Ben-Ari uses Abu-Lighod and Lutz's work on the embodiment of emotion (Abu-Lighod & Lutz, 1990) to demonstrate how Japanese young children learn to transfer emotional resonances learned at home with their family members to their classmates in preschool. Ben-Ari focuses on the multi-sensorial experience of co-sleeping, but a similar case can be made for the embodiment of emotion in children's fights at preschool. For the children fighting, the teddy bear scuffle was clearly embodied, not just in the sense of bodily contact, but also in the intense shared experiencing of the sights, sounds, and smells that accompany rolling around on the floor pulling and tugging on a bear, and in the interlocking of pinkies while making a promise, the wiping away of tears, and the embrace at the fight's resolution. What is less readily apparent is how the fight provides an experience of embodied learning of emotions as well for those on the periphery, who also engage multi-sensorially with the action. Rather than being passive, the gyarari children are engaged in intense, focused looking and listening and even, at times, in reaching out and touching the fight protagonists. Moreover, unlike the members of a theater audience who are generally confined to a single seat at some remove from the action on the stage, the gyarari at these fights move around, sometimes approaching close enough to touch the protagonists, sometimes moving back, and sometimes imitating with their bodies the movements of the protagonists.

Collective vs. Self Regulation

Most American early childhood educational practices and beliefs, as well as Western theories of child development, emphasize constraint on anti-social behavior as self-constraint. In contrast, the Japanese early childhood educators' reflections on the two gyarari scenes emphasize the importance of children learning to function as a self-monitoring, self-controlling community. The locus of control on misbehavior is on the group, rather than on each child as an individual. The gyarari is conceived by Japanese early childhood educators not as a gaggle or mob of rubberneckers, but rather as a collective, with the power to induce pro-social and limit anti-social behavior in others.

When I asked preschool teachers if they ever ask children who are watching fights to move away, most said no, and emphasized not just that watching was beneficial for the watching children, but also for those being watched. For example, a teacher in Tokyo answered, "Well, occasionally, yes. But most of the times, I tell the children who are directly involved that other children care about you and are worried about you." In addition to providing empathy and emotional support, the observing children are seen as a source of control on the fight protagonists. As Professor Usui Hiroshi of Hokkaido University of Education told me: "The watching children function as one of the factors that controls the fighting. The observers don't let the stronger children take things away from the weaker ones all the time. They provide some self-regulation to the fighters." This comment is characteristic of the Japanese cultural belief in the collective ability of the group to self-regulate and in the importance

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of preschool as a site for this collective ability to be experienced, learned, practiced, and cultivated.

Rather than passive observers, the children watching in these fight scenes are active on several levels. They are active, in the sense that they choose to watch and to attend to what they are watching. They also are active in the sense that they respond to the actions they are observing, verbally as well as non-verbally. Some of the watching children literally take action, closing the gap between actors and audience, protagonists and observers. For example, Yoko is among the peripherally involved children watching the first noted of the fights until Reiko says to her, "You should scold Nao." Yoko responds to this call, and abandons her spot in the gyarari to become an actor. As Yoko admonishes Nao, she puts her arm around her waist, as if playing the part of a teacher or mother. In the Madoka video we see Toshi, a boy in the gyarari, become physically involved by reaching out and patting one of the disputant's on the head, echoing a gesture just made by the teacher.

Director Machiyama of Madoka Yochien in Tokyo referred to the children on the periphery of the fights not as a gyarari but as a *gaiya*, in his comment, "The gaiya choose to watch their friends' fights." *Gaiya* is a word used in Japan mostly in baseball, where it can mean the bleachers, and in this sense the meaning is close to that of the word *gyarari*; but it can also mean the outfielders. The outfielders spend most of the game standing some distance from the central action, but their active participation, though sporadic, is essential. The children on the periphery of the fights are, to follow Director Machiyama's metaphor, like

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fans in the bleachers cheering their team on; or, perhaps, like outfielders, watching and waiting, ready to make a play when needed.

In Japan, as in many other countries, for most contemporary children the preschool is their first and best opportunity to learn to be a member of a community, or in Japanese metaphorical terms, the first site where they get such opportunities to be members of a gyarari or a gaiya. Both *Preschool in Three Cultures* projects showed how a primary function of preschools is to turn young children into culturally appropriate members of society. Japanese preschools are sites for teaching young children to have a characteristically Japanese sense of self, which is to say a sense of self that is socially minded. Japanese preschool teachers' understandings of peripheral participation in fights is a piece of this larger picture of how Japanese preschool classrooms function as sites for teaching young children to come into selfhood collectively.

The concepts of collective selfhood and collective self-regulation sound oxymoronic to Western ears, but not so in Japan. I suggest that the perspective of Japanese educators that the locus of control for fighting and other anti-social behaviors is at the level of the group rather than the individual is a useful addition and challenge to Western psychological theories of self-regulation and more generally of child development (Shimizu, 2000). Most of the work on the development of pro-sociality in psychology focuses on how individuals experience and express emotions and on how individuals control or fail to control their behavior. As Eisenberg et al. write in their 1996 work on children's pro-social behavior: "Three aspects of individuals' dispositional functioning related to

pro-social responding are individual differences in children's emotionality, regulation, and social competence (1996, p. 975; Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). In another article, Eisenberg and Spinrad make a useful distinction between self-regulation and "externally imposed regulation," and between being able to regulate emotion oneself and modulating emotion primarily through the efforts of others" (2004, p. 336). A Japanese emic perspective would recast this distinction as a group regulating its own emotions and behaviors, versus the group being regulated by others (e.g., with the intervention of a teacher).

This Japanese perspective on regulation, while not negating the importance of understanding individual processes of emotion, cognition, and behavior, would expand the Western psychological literature by seeing the locus of control in a preschool classroom not just or primarily as the sum of the self-regulation of each child, but also as the collective emotional and social skills of the class as a community. The focus is on helping children learn to be members of the class as a community, and then on providing opportunities for this community to develop the capacity to self-regulate.

I am not the first researcher to call for more attention to communal forms of behavioral regulation and for the need for greater attention to how young children learn in preschool to function collaboratively. Catherine Raeff warns against essentialized notions of cultures as being independent versus interdependent. Just as US preschool teachers support the development in children of interdependent behaviors and attitudes (Raeff, 2006), Japanese teachers support children's independence as well as interdependence (Peak, 1991). In arguing that

the Japanese emic understanding of peripheral participation emphasizes the encouragement of a collective locus of control I do not mean to suggest that peripherally participating children in Japanese preschools do not also have individual motives or that they lack the ability for self-control. As Raeff (2000; 2006) argues, it cannot be the case that children in some cultures are independent and in some cultures interdependent, for all cultures require people to act both independently and interdependently. Therefore, as Raeff suggests, the focus of my analysis should be on explicating in which contexts in a culture children are expected to act independently and in which contexts interdependently. I am suggesting not that Japanese teachers always or consistently discourage independence, but that in the domain of dealing with children's fights in Japanese preschool classrooms there is general encouragement from teachers for an interdependent solution.

I would also point out that though like Japanese preschools teachers, US preschools teachers talk with children about the importance of thinking of the classroom as a community of friends and of the need to consider others' feelings and to not be selfish (Raeff, 2006), that the strategies US teachers use to encourage interdependence are different from those I describe in this chapter and elsewhere (Hayashi, Karasawa, & Tobin, 2009; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa, 2009) as favored by Japanese preschool teachers and directors. I see a contrast between the mostly teacher-led, teacher-mediated discourse of sharing and friendship in U.S. preschools described by Raeff and in *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* (2009) and the child-organized practices commonly found in Japanese preschools,

which feature less teacher-led instruction on the virtues of interdependence and more emphasis on learning communal skills and attitudes through indirect, observational learning and peripheral participation.

Ijime

An important finding of my analysis of the interviews is what Japanese early childhood educators did not say about these fighting scenes but might have said, which is that these fights are in some way connected to *ijime*, or classroom bullying. *Ijime* is a considered to be a significant educational and social problem in Japan (Akiba, 2004), especially at the middle school level (LeTendre, 2000; Fukuzawa & LeTendre, 2001). *Ijime* in its paradigmatic form involves a group of children, or even a whole class, ostracizing, teasing, and in other ways harassing a single child. Akiba (2004) suggests that *ijime* should be viewed as both an effect and a symptom of a more general break down of society, a form of Japanese post-modern anomie in which the traditional community structures have been eroded:

> The lack of group orientation and trusting peer relationship may be a reflection of larger societal changes towards individualization (Fukuzawa & LeTendre, 2001). With a smaller number of businessmen spending after hours for socializing with their colleagues and a diminished sense of local community where neighbors are strangers, it is becoming more difficult to expect their children to develop group-orientation and trusting peer relationship. Despite these societal changes, there have been few changes in the school organization to foster collective values to prepare students for the society. The impact of the gap between the societal changes and the

traditional role of schools to foster Japanese cultural values needs to be examined in relation to Ijime phenomenon in future studies (2004, p. 234).

While ijime is mostly a middle-school and high-school phenomenon in Japan, Japanese educators are concerned about the antecedents in lower grades. Some Japanese educators I interviewed (but few of the early childhood educators) saw in the fight over the teddy bear at Komatsudani the beginnings of *ijime*. For example, Masakazu Mitsumura, who is conducting research on middle-school *ijime*, said of the girls' fight:

> Even though *ijime* is considered mostly a lower secondary school problem, these days concern about the antecedents of *ijime* behavior makes even preschool teachers worry about bullying in their classrooms and to second-guess their traditional non-intervention approach. What we see happening in this scene in your video in my opinion might contribute to the development of *ijime* behavior later. I worry less about the children directly involved in the fight than about the effect on the bystanders, who are watching and developing bad habits of following the lead of the dominant figures in the classroom and becoming passive bullies.

In contrast, most of the Japanese early childhood educators I interviewed, while agreeing that *ijime* is a major social concern, and agreeing that the antecedents of classroom behavior and misbehavior begin in preschool, argued that the social skills children need to acquire to cohere as an effective classroom community are best supported not through direct instruction or heavy teacher intervention, but

instead by providing ample opportunities for young children collectively to experience complex social interactions. As Morita-sensei explained:

> If I think a fight, such as this one in the video, is unlikely to result in anybody getting hurt, I stay back and wait and observe. I want the children to learn to be strong enough to handle such small quarrels. I want them to have the power to endure. If it's not dangerous, I welcome their fighting.

When I asked Morita-sensei to respond to the suggestion that the girls were bullying Nao-chan, she replied,

> She is strong. All the children have strong personalities, so in this kind of situation they all want to make their case and put forward their opinion. Compared with the other children, Nao is not very good at speaking. She cries when she can't express what she wants to say verbally. But as you saw in the videotape, even while she was crying, Nao tried to pull the teddy bear back. She has a strong core.

Morita-sensei went on to explain that she viewed Nao's behavior, though babyish and seemingly counterproductive, as pro-social, as she also viewed the older girls' aggressive responses. *Ijime* usually takes the form of ostracizing and excluding a classmate seen as weak. Nao's interactions with the other girls are just the opposite: intense emotional interactions, initiated by Nao as well as her classmates, with the expression of affection as well as anger and critique. In this sense I suggest that the fighting scenes I am analyzing here are the precursors not of middle-school *ijime*, but the opposite—the kind of social interactions that allow

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young children to learn to experience themselves as members of a classroom community.

Seken: The Social Gaze

In the Madoka video, as she is mediating the fight, Kaizuka-sensei says to the two boys: *Kamisama datte miterun dayo.* In English this can translated as either "God, too, is watching," or "The gods, too, are watching," or "The spirits, too, are watching you." The notion of god in Shinto comes from the belief that everything in nature--water, mountains, flowers, trees, rocks--have spirits and therefore are kinds of gods. There is a Shinto expression that refers to "eight million spirits," which means that the eyes of the gods are everywhere. This Shinto notion, in turn, is tied to the Japanese traditional concept of *seken no me*. *Seken* literally means "society;" *me* means "eyes." Together they mean literally, "the eyes of society," or, following Takie Lebra's definition, "the generalized audience" (1976). Lebra lists a set of related terms *seken-nami* (conforming to seken standards, or ordinary), *seken-banare* (incongruent with seken conventions, or eccentric), and *seken-shirazu* (unaware of seken rules, or naïve). Like the phrase "The gods see everything," "seken no me" carries the meaning of being aware that one is always being watched. A related phrase used by many of the Japanese early childhood educators to describe the children on periphery of the fight scenes was *mawari no ko,* literally, "the children around" or "the children surrounding." This phrase was sometimes used in conjunction with *mawari no iken*—the opinions of people around you.

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Interestingly, Kaizuka-sensei said not just that "The gods (*kamisama*) are watching (*miterun*), but that the gods, *too,* are watching (*kamisama datte miterun, daiyo*). *Datte* means "as well" or "too." Besides the gods, who else, then, is watching the boys? One interpretation is that their teacher, Kaizuka-sensei is also always watching. Another interpretation is that the two boys are watching each other. A third interpretation is that everyone in the community of the classroom is always watching each other (which is a paraphrase of *seken no me*, or "generalized audience"). "The gods, too, are watching" is thus Kaizuka-sensei's way of reminding the boys and the surrounding gyarari of the existence of people around them, who are watching, and care about the participants and what they do.

In the old days in Japan in a village or in a city neighborhood everyone knew each other and everyone took responsibility for watching and, when necessary, correcting children. For instance, if a child did something naughty or dangerous on the street any adult who saw him would let him know he was being watched and correct his/her behavior. Such collective regulation of behavior has become increasingly rarer in modern Japan, where demographic change and modernization has led to the dissolution of the coherence of traditional rural and urban neighborhoods and therefore of the power of the *seken* (generalized others) and *mawari no iken* (opinions of others). With this shift, preschools have increasingly become the first and most important place where young children come to practice and experience being watched by and watching others. Professor Usui Hiroshi approved of teachers' giving children opportunities to solve their

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own disputes because it allows children to experience a social complexity lacking in their lives at home:

> This is compensatory education. These days, children lack opportunities to experience human relationships. In the old days, children had siblings, but not anymore. Now that Japan is wealthy they have their own toys and own rooms. Living this way, they never have the experience of fighting over things and of watching others fight over things.

A preschool director in Tokyo said of the children's desire to be part of the gyarari watching the fights: "There is no single thing that is not their business. Everything that happens here is everybody's business, as long as they are at the preschool. They live together."

The value Japanese educators place on the socializing power of the gaze of others contrasts with Foucault's notion of panopticism, and more generally with discourses in Western scholarship on visibility and power. In Western educational discourse, it is the teacher, with eyes in the back of her head and trained in the importance of setting up her classroom so all her students are always visible to her, whose gaze maintains classroom order. In contrast, in the Japanese early childhood classroom it is the group of children who are encouraged to keep each other in view and to use their collective gaze to maintain order. In such a classroom power is more diffuse, and not concentrated in the teacher.

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault describes several regimes of visibility, several versions of the power of the gaze. The first is the Spectacle, as represented in his description of the public torture and execution of a regicide in 17th Century

France. The second is the Dungeon. The notion of discipline most readers take from Foucault's book as being emblematic of our modern condition is the Panopticon, the prison invented by Jeremy Bentham and analyzed by Foucault in which a single guard peering out through a small window can surveille and thereby control a hundred or more prisoners housed in a grid of cells. But for Foucault the more chillingly effective form of surveillance is the internalization of the Panopticon and the rise of the self-monitoring, self-judging, self-punishing modern ego. This inward disciplining gaze is created in the contemporary child in contemporary Western society both at home and also in the preschool, where the goal is that he eventually need not be watched by others once he has learned to watch himself. The discourse of Japanese early childhood education emphasizes neither control of misbehavior by the surveillance of the teacher (the panopticon model) nor control through the self-regulation of the individual members of the class (the internalization model) but instead control through collective responsibility and collective surveillance and vigilance. In this model the gaze is the gaze of a gallery, not of a guard. And the gaze is seen as primarily pro-social and humanizing rather than as draconian and dehumanizing.

Most writing on *seken* emphasizes the positive effect this generalizing gaze has on would-be or actual miscreants, whose impulse to misbehave is controlled by fear of public censure and shame. But I suggest that the experience of being part of a *seken,* and sharing in administering the collective gaze is also beneficial for the gazers who have an opportunity to participate in intense emotional experiences and to experience the sense of community such shared

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participation produces in all involved. Shimizu discusses a scene of a gyarari in Meiji-era Japan collectively experiencing deep emotion, as described in a story by Lacadio Hearn, about an incident he witnessed in which a thief who had killed a policeman who pursued him was captured and brought to the town square where he was brought face to face with the wife and son of his victim. Hearn describes what happened as the traumatized boy burst into tears in front of the captured criminal:

> The crowd seemed to have stopped breathing. I saw the prisoner's features distort; I saw him suddenly dash himself down upon his knees despite his fetters, and beat his face into the dust, crying out the while in a passion of hoarse remorse that made one's heart shake: "Pardon! Pardon! Pardon me, little one! That I did—not for hate was it done, but in mad fear only, in my desire to escape. Very, very wicked I have been; great unspeakable wrong have I done you! But now for my sin I go to die. I wish I die; I am glad to die! Therefore, o little one, be pitiful!—Forgive me!" The child still cried silently. The officer raised the shaking criminal; the dumb crowd parted left and right to let them by. Then, quite suddenly, the whole multitude began to sob (1896, p.11).

I can say that this is a kind of gaze that stands outside the Western genealogy of optical disciplinary regimes described by Foucault. Or, if I were to categorize it according to Foucault's types, I would have to say it is the gaze not of the Panopticon, the Dungeon, nor of internalized self-scrutiny, but instead a gaze closer to the logic of the Spectacle and to an era when emotionally charged

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interactions were watched and emotionally experienced by the community, a shared experience considered beneficial for all involved.

The Teachers' Role

This implicit cultural practice of teachers not intervening in children's disputes does not mean never intervening, but instead having non-intervention in children's fights as an option, a strategy they can deploy. In the segment of the video from Komatsudani, the teacher, Morita-sensei, chooses to not intervene as the girls fight over the bear. However when the fight seemed to her to be on the verge of getting out of control, Morita-sensei called out from across the room, "*Kora Kora*" (Hey, Hey). A teacher in Tokyo complimented her on this light-handed strategic intervention, which she suggested allowed the children to continue working out the problem in their own way, by cueing them to be thoughtful about their behavior without directly intervening: "See, when the teacher called out to them, how they turned from being physical to being verbal." Morita-sensei's strategic use of a subtle intervention in this dispute can be said to have scaffolded the girls' interaction, providing opportunities for children to practice collective control.

In the Madoka video we see Kaizuka-sensei intervene much more aggressively in the dispute between the two boys, which she ended up mediating. But there are other times during the day in the videotape in her classroom that we saw Kaizuka-sensei choose not to intervene in fights. Like Morita-sensei, Kaizuka-sensei strategically chooses when to intervene and when to stay back. In *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* the analysis of the hair pulling and

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pinching incident focused on what the two fighting boys learned from the way

Kaizuka-sensei mediated and scaffolded their exploration of their feelings and led

them through a process of apology and reconciliation. Now, as I pull back my

focus, and notice the children on the periphery of this mediated discussion, we

can see how Kaizuka-sensei's intervention also created an opportunity for a

gyarari to form and for a group of children to experience vicarious emotion,

empathize, and learn.

The reasoning behind the non-interventionist strategy is to give children

ample opportunities to deal with socially complex situations including arguments

and fights. This reasoning does not require that teachers never intervene, just that

do not always or usually intervene. Kaizuka's stated policy on disputing in

children's physical disputes is almost exactly the same as Morita-sensei's:

> When there's a fight among children, I watch and wait and try to decide if
>
> they are really attempting to hurt each other, or if it is just rough play. It is
>
> sometimes hard to tell. If it looks like it's getting to be too rough or that it
>
> might get out of control, I tell them to be less rough, but I don't tell them
>
> to stop.

In deciding whether or not to intervene both teachers say they use the

strategy of *mimamoru*, of observing and "standing guard" instead of immediately

taking action. This strategy is related to a pedagogical approach called *machi no*

hoiku ("caring for children by waiting"), an approach that although not formally

taught in Japanese colleges of education or stated in the official curriculum

guides, is employed by preschool teachers across Japan. As a preschool teacher

in Tokyo explained to me: "Japanese teachers wait till children solve their problems on their own. Children know their abilities, what they can do. So we wait. It could be said that we are able to wait because we believe in children." Mimamoru and machi no hoiku are not easy to practice. They are not a passive absence of action but instead a strategic deployment of non-action, a strategy, like other Japanese regimens of self-control, that takes years of experience to master. Morita-sensei told me, "After five years of teaching I'm just starting to feel like I know what I am doing and to have confidence that I can make the right decisions about when to act and when to hold back and watch." Retired director Yoshizawa sensei told me: "It takes a real care for a professional to tell the difference between rough-play and a real fight. It takes at least five years." Director Kumagai of Senzan Yochien in Kyoto commented on the fighting scene at Komatsudani by saying:

> This teacher can wait because she has three years experiences of working in a day-care center. First year teachers can't wait. This is the big difference between an experienced preschool teacher and most young parents. Watching and waiting (*mimamoru*) is very difficult for parents. If most parents were at school and they saw their children in a fight like this, they couldn't stand it. They'd have to do something. So would inexperienced teachers. That's why we need experienced teachers, who can stand back and watch and wait. Children need to be given opportunities to experience life in the gray zone, where things aren't just

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black and white. When teachers intervene too quickly, it's like they are picking a bud before it has a chance to flower.

The role of the teacher in such a classroom is demanding. Children need to know you are paying enough attention to give them confidence that someone will be there to keep things from getting totally out of control. But the teachers' presence, her watchfulness, has to be soft enough so children take responsibility, and so they perform primarily not for her, but rather for and in interaction with their classmates. Morita-sensei artfully manages this balancing act, as she shifts back and forth from acting as if she is not paying attention to the fighting children to occasionally letting them know that she is watching. The art of teaching in such a classroom, which is to say the art of Japanese preschool teaching, is to be aware of what is happening while seeming to be not watching. In their review of observational learning Gaskins and Paradise (2009) emphasize that when children are allowed to follow their interests and are given only minimal feedback, "They take initiative in directing their attention and finding or creating activities to practice on their own skills they have not yet mastered (p.97)."

By avoiding being the audience for the children's performance, Morita-sensei allows for a child-oriented, child-like piece of drama to unfold. Several of the Japanese teachers commented that the children in the fighting scene at Komatsudani are "acting *kodomorashii* (childlike)." While Kaizuka-sensei's interventionist approach seems to be the opposite from Morita-sense's, there is a deeper similarity. Morita-sensei intervenes with the fighting boys, but not with the gyarari who gathers around them. Both teachers allow children on the periphery

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of these fights to take on the roles of the audience, of the legitimately peripherally participating classroom community.

Conclusion

To suggest that the kind of peripheral participation I have described here, emphasizing a group of children observing, empathetically experiencing, and getting involved in classmates' disputes is characteristically Japanese is not to suggest that such beliefs and practices are unique to Japan. I am not suggesting that there is anything unusual about preschool children becoming peripheral participants in other children's fights. What I am suggesting is cultural and characteristically Japanese is how Japanese teachers respond to such fights and the way they think and talk about their practice. The chapters on Japan in the two *Preschool in Three Cultures* books argued that the Japanese non-interventionist approach to children's fighting is an implicit cultural practice of Japanese early childhood education that allows the fighting children to experience a range of emotions and to benefit from the opportunity to work out their own solutions to disputes. Here I have expanded this analysis by adding that the Japanese teachers' goal is to encourage not just the protagonists at the center of the fight, but also the wider group of children who gather around fights to explore, collectively, child-like solutions to disputes. Rather than telling the galleries of peripherally participating children "To move away" or "This is none of your business," they allow and quietly encourage children to get involved in everything that goes on in the classroom.

In calling this approach characteristically Japanese I am not suggesting that it is uniquely Japanese or uniquely suited to be used as a strategy in the Japanese context. My suspicion is that preschool teachers in other cultures also at least sometimes allow non-combatants to peripherally participate in their classmates fights rather than shooing them away. An area for future research would be to study legitimate peripheral participation in children's fights in preschools in other cultures.

This chapter also has potentially useful implications for practice. One of my goals in describing and explicating the Japanese emic approach to legitimate peripheral participation in fights is to present to early childhood education practitioners and teacher educators in the United States and other countries an approach to dealing with children's fighting which they might consider adapting in their own classrooms.

In closing, I would add that although my focus in this work has been on the gyarari that form around fights, I have reason to believe that Japanese early childhood educators are equally supportive of peripheral participation of children in other emotion-laden events, such as children experiencing sadness (Hayashi et al. 2009). Fights are dramatic, but they are far from the only dramas that take place everyday in preschool classrooms. For example, in the Komatsudani video, there is a scene of Nao arriving at school and having a difficult time separating from her mother at the gate. Maki, who has been watching this unfolding drama from a few meters away, then approaches Nao, and helps her make the transition to her life in the preschool. Studies of peripheral participation in Japanese

classrooms should be expanded to other domains, cognitive as well as social and

emotional.

Chapter 4

MIMAMORU (TEACHING BY WATCHING)

Introduction

In the United States, children's fighting is considered a form of misbehavior and when children fight preschool teachers usually intervene as quickly as possible. Che, Hayashi, and Tobin (2007) suggest that there are good reasons American teachers to follow a strategy of intervening in disputes and helping children express their feelings with words rather than by hitting. In their 1989 study, Tobin, Wu, and Davidson found that most of the American preschool teachers and administrators who watched a videotape of a typical day in a Japanese preschool were bothered by teachers not intervening immediately in children's fights.

In contrast, research suggests that Japanese preschool teachers do not intervene nearly as quickly in instances of children's fighting. Peak (1991) suggests that Japanese teachers are comparatively undisturbed by children fighting and even hitting. Incidents of misbehavior and fighting that arise in the course of the day are usually ignored. She also finds that when teachers do intervene, they are more concerned about re-establishing harmony between children by getting them to apologize to and forgive each other than they are with chastising or punishing the "offender." Lewis (1995) suggests that Japanese preschool teachers rarely act to stop fights and she provides examples of preschool teachers asking other children to help to resolve disputes. The Japanese

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teachers in her study viewed fighting not as a problem of individual children but as a class problem and a teaching opportunity.

The point I want to make in this chapter is not that Japanese teachers never intervene, but that non-intervention is an option available to Japanese teachers for responding to fights. In Japan non-intervention is a commonly employed pedagogical strategy that reflects a widely shared approach to childhood socialization. Even Japanese teachers who say they would be quicker to intervene than the teachers in the Preschool in Three Cultures studies, nevertheless find the reasoning behind the teachers' non-intervention familiar and compelling. I suggest that this reasoning is based on the logic of *mimamoru,* an emic term that is a key notion that underlies and explains Japanese teachers' non-intervention approach to children's fighting and is a pedagogical philosophy and practice I see more generally in Japanese early childhood education. In this chapter, I am going to define *mimamoru*" and explore the questions of how does a teacher do *mimamoru* and what do teachers think about while doing *mimamoru*?

A Scene from the 2002 video, "A Day at Komatsudani Hoikuen"

An argument breaks out among four girls during free playtime. Nao, Seiko, and Reiko are pulling and tugging on the teddy bear. Maki is looking their argument.

Seiko: Pull it this way

Maki: Let go

Seiko and Reiko: We got it! We got it!

Nao is crying but she still tries to get the teddy bear back.

Seiko: She is taking it back

Seiko: We got it, we got it!

The three girls fall to the floor into a pile of twisting, pushing and pulling bodies.

Morita-sensei from across the room and says "Kora-Kora (Hey!), Kora Kora

(Hey!)", but she doesn't come over to the girls. Nao is crying.

Reiko: Nao-chan, it's not yours. It's Seiko's

Nao is still crying. The girls discuss what to do. Maki suggests that Seiko should

give the bear to Nao. After a while, Nao is still crying, but she again goes to Seiko

who still has the teddy bear.

Seiko: Don't cry

Maki: Seiko, give it to her

Seiko: It's fine if you say, "Let me borrow"

Nao: Give it to me

Yoko: No!

The other twin: Stop it!

Nao: Give it to me

Yoko: you shouldn't take it

Reiko (said to Yoko): you should scold her

Yoko: That's bad! You can't grab the bear away like that!

Nao: But I had it first

Maki: But then you put it down, so your turn was over

Nao is led away to the other side of the room by Seiko, who links little fingers

with Nao, the two girls swinging their arms back and forth as they sing, "Keep

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this promise or swallow a thousand needles!" Seiko then puts her arm around

Nao's shoulders.

Watching and Waiting

After showing this scene to Japanese educators, I asked them "What do

you think about this scene?" and "What would you do if you were in this

situation?" One Japanese preschool teacher explained to me:

> Japanese teachers wait until children solve their problems on their own. . .
>
> . Children know their ability, what they can do. So, we are waiting. It can
>
> be said we believe in children, so we can wait. Otherwise, children
>
> become people who can't do things without permission. Of course, we
>
> teach them if they can't understand. But after we say something several
>
> times, we wait and watch (*mimamoru*) what's going on for children.

This explanation introduces the idea that there is a philosophy of childcare

based on the notion of "doing nothing but watching and waiting." This Japanese

pedagogical strategy is expressed in the terms "*mimamoru*" and "*machi no*

hoiku." These two terms tend to be used together in early childhood education

settings. "*Mimamoru*" is a word often used not only by Japanese teachers, but also

parents. *Mi* means to watch and *mamoru* means to guard. When put together,

these two words make a phrase that has two main meanings. One is to watch

carefully in order to avoid making mistakes or having an accident. The second

meaning is to observe. For example, *mimamoru* is used in such phrases as

"*kodomo no seichyou wo mimamoru* (to watch children's growing)" and "*nariyuki*

wo mimamoru (to follow the course of events)." Teachers often use "*mimamoru*"

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to describe their approach to educating and caring for children. In order to "*mimamoru,*" teachers need to wait, to follow an approach of *machi no hoiku.* Hoiku means nurturing or child rearing. *Machi* is a form of the verb "to wait." *Machi no hoiku* is a pedagogical approach based on waiting, patience, taking a long perspective, and watching rather than acting.

Visibility

In the scene in the video of the girls fighting over the teddy bear, Morita-sensei's only noticeable reaction is to call out from across the room: "*Kora kora, kora kora*!" (which in English means something like "Hey"). Uttering this phrase may seem unimportant. I suggest, however, that her use of "*kora kora*" is an important piece of her larger strategy of *mimamoru* and *machi no hoiku*. One of the meanings of *mimamoru* is to stand guard. The guard does his or her job not just or primarily by occasionally intervening but also just by virtue of letting people know that there is someone on guard. Children know that their teacher is watching them and that if the situation gets too rough or out of control, that the teacher is there to help them. The teacher's watching in this way gives the children the confidence and security they need to try to work things out on their own. She provides a sort of safety net or scaffolding for the children's interaction. Another teacher told me: "It is very important that people experience warmness. The feeling that people believe in me is a big thing. This is Japanese traditional childcare. From this big feeling of relief, children figure out their independence."

It is not enough for children to know that the teacher is waiting (holding back); they also need to know that she is watching. Japanese teachers I

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interviewed often use the terms *mimamorareru*" ("to be watched") and

mimamorareteiru ("being watched") in sentences such as "Children need to know

that they are being watched by their teacher," and "Being watched gives children

confidence." These comments show the connection between *mimamoru* and the

traditional Japanese cultural concept of *seken no me.* As I mentioned in Chapter 3,

seken literally means "society;" *me* means "eyes." Together they mean literally,

"the eyes of society." When used outside of school settings, this concept

sometimes has a negative meaning, as in suggestions that one is surrounded by

nosey neighbors; but traditionally it had a positive meaning, pointing to the

positive role of social concern, especially for caring for children, as expressed in

common phrases such as "In the old days in a village or in a city neighborhood

everyone knew each other and everyone took responsibility for watching and,

when necessary, correcting children." For instance, if a child did something

naughty or dangerous on the street any adult who saw him would let him know he

was being watched or that what he was doing is dangerous or bad. A lament often

heard in contemporary Japan is that this sense of being watched and therefore

protected and cared for by the eyes of the community has been lost with the loss

of traditional values and customs that come with urbanization. In contemporary

Japan preschool has replaced the rural village and urban neighborhood as the key

site where children come to experience the feeling of *mimamorareru* – to be

watched and *mimamorareteiru* – being watched.

I find examples of this strategy of holding back and watching in Japanese

teachers' explanations for a range of pedagogical practices and developmental

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goals, including giving children opportunities to develop emotional, social, and intellectual skills. As a preschool teacher in Tokyo told me: "We think we want children to have *omoiyari* (empathy) and also we think it's important to support their mental development. In order for this to happen, children need time to struggle by themselves. So, we are watching (*mimamoru*)." There is a scene in the Komatsudani video that shows 5-year-old children spending half an hour in the infant and toddler rooms and helping care for the younger children. They help the little ones change clothes, eat, play and even use the bathroom. When I asked "Isn't it sometimes dangerous?" Nogami-sensei, the teacher of the five-year old class, answered "We keep a close eye *(mimamoru)* on the children." In the video, after the official day is over, we see children playing on the playground and one girl is standing on top of a horizontal bar, five feet off the ground. Samata-sensei stands nearby, watching her, and she says, "Be careful." But she does not do anything to stop the girl from continuing with her dangerous play.

Mimamoru and *seken no me* suggest a notion of visibility that is quite different from discourses of visibility discussed in Western scholarship, and especially in Foucault's notion of panopticism. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault describes several forms of visibility, including the panopticon, the prison invented by Jeremy Bentham and in which a single guard looking out through a small window can survey and thereby control a hundred or more prisoners housed in a grid of cells. But for Foucault the more effective and disturbing form of surveillance is the internalization of the panopticon and the development of the self-monitoring, self-judging, self-punishing modern ego. This inward

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disciplining gaze is created in the contemporary child in contemporary Western society both at home and also in the preschool, where the goal is that he eventually need not be watched by others once he has learned to watch himself. In contrast to this negative view of visibility, in Japanese preschools the gaze is seen as primarily pro-social and humanizing.

The central point here is not that teachers in Japanese preschools hesitate to intervene, but that teachers watch while not intervening and the children know that their teacher is watching. This is a complex dynamic: on one hand, the teacher needs to seem to not be watching, because she wants the children to deal with each other without expecting the teacher to intervene; but on the other hand, the teacher wants the children to know that she is aware of what they are doing, to keep their interaction from spinning out of control and to give the children confidence to take risks, knowing that she is available to jump in if things fall apart. This is the art of Japanese teaching: the art of watching without being either too little or too much present. One teacher said:

> We often use the term *mimamoru*. There is no true or untrue *mimamoru*. But I think *mimamoru* does not mean that teachers watch children from a distance, or let children know we are watching, and that we are ready to go if something happens; rather, we just exist in the classroom and create the mood that teachers can protect you if something happens. It is more like the "air" around that protects us. I know the way I am explaining this is not easy to understand, right? Does it make sense?

Interestingly, this teacher uses the term "the air" rather than "watching" to describe her approach. The *mi* in *mimamoru* literarily means watching but it seems that this watching carries the feeling of an invisible gaze, of a presence so all-encompassing but subtle as to be no more noticeable than the atmosphere that surrounds us.

Space and Body

Japanese teachers' reflections on their visibility to students leads to questions about how teachers use of space and the body. We can think of these pedagogical approach as an embodied performance of attention and inattention. As they *mimamoru,* teachers need to move back and forth between being more and less present to the children. This is not only where they stand in their classroom, but also the "attitude" of their body, whether their posture suggests attention, concern, casualness, or distraction. Teachers have to regulate/adjust their appearance of paying attention strategically according to the situation. If children seem too dependent on them/too aware of them, the teacher has to adjust her gaze and posture to appear to be too busy doing something to pay attention to them, such as Fukui-sensei in the original video sweeping and cleaning tables while children are fighting and tattle-telling to her. At other times, when they sense kids are about to get out of hand, they have to adjust their appearance to seem to be paying more attention, such as when Morita-sensei calls out "Kora Kora." Teachers also use posture, head tilting, and other body adjustments, in addition to eye contact, to signal levels of attention/disattention. In the *Techniques of the Body* Marcel Mauss (1973) writes: "The body is man's first and most

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natural instrument (p. 75)." Mauss claims that "Each society has its own special habits (p. 72)," and "In all these elements of the art of using the human body, the facts of education were dominant (p.73)." Following Mauss, I suggest that each teaching strategy has its own special bodily habits. When Japanese teacher do *mimamoru*, they use their body as a principle instrument.

Just as these Japanese emic teaching practices are related to techniques of the body, they are also related to the way classroom and school grounds space is arranged and used. For example, Director Machiyama, the director of Madoka Youchien, explained about how we had worked with an architect to design the grounds so as to provide children with *ajito* (hideaways):

> *Ajito* is the space that children think it's their own space. They think that teachers cannot see them when they are in *ajito*. But of course, it would be a huge problem if we have a space in the preschool that teachers cannot watch them. The key is children think that it's their own space.

This explanation is consistent with how preschool teachers locate themselves in the classroom to most effectively practice *mimamoru*. Teachers want children to be able to handle problems on their own. As one preschool teacher told me, she wants to be like the "air" in the classroom, being always present, but avoiding giving children too much direction or pressure. Director Machiyama suggests that teachers watch children when they enter *ajito* places, without drawing the children's attention to the fact that they are being watched. Former director of Komatsudani, Yoshizawa-sensei explained to me a disadvantage of their new building. They rebuilt the building in the late 1990s and the new building has two

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floors. He said, "One of the disadvantages we got from this rebuilding project is we cannot see each other. We put the infant and toddler classes downstairs and have 4-5 years olds upstairs. Of course we have always had separate classrooms for different ages, but when we had all ages on the same floor, we all knew what was going on in the other classrooms and the teachers could help each other if necessary." This statement suggests that he connects the spatial arrangement of the school to concerns about *mimamoru*. Ideally, preschool space is organized in a way that provides opportunity for teachers to watch each other as well as for teachers to watch children.

These conceptions of the use of space and the body are parts of the art of *mimamoru.* I suggest that the time it takes for a young teacher to be able to master this art is one of the chief reasons why Japanese teachers and directors told me that it takes time to be able to be a good teacher.

Time

There are three notions of time at work in the practice of *mimamoru*; the first is preschool teachers' strategy of "wait time," and their sense of how long to wait before intervening; the second is a focus on the time children need to develop, and the patience teachers should have especially with the social interactions of their youngest pupils; the third is also a long perspective, an appreciation for the time preschool teachers need to master the pedagogical skills of *mimamoru* and *machi no hoiku*. In addition, I could say there is a fourth sense of time—historical time. The former director of Komatsudani hoikuen Yoshizawa-sensei saw non-intervention and other strategies used by teachers at

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Komatsudani as traditional practices that are needed more now than ever to correct problems of modernization, social change, and the spoiling of single children and other poor parenting practices. *Mimamoru* is a traditional practice especially needed in contemporary times to give children traditional social skills and values.

Wait Time

During the girls' fighting, the teacher did not intervene. She said just one phrase "*Kora Kora, Kora Kora* (Hey Hey)!" "*Kora Kora*" may signal "I see what you are doing," but it does not exactly mean, "Stop." She tells me, "If I intervene and tell the children to do this or that, it would be easy and quick." So why then did she not intervene? For Morita-sensei, teachers should observe children's fighting and not intervene, although this is more difficult than intervening, as she knows that if she intervenes, things are easily solved. She needs to be patient and to adapt an attitude of *mimamoru*, which takes more energy and skill than it takes to intervene. Kumagai-sensei, a Japanese preschool director in Kyoto, commented to me after she watched Morita-sensei dealing with fights in the Komatsudani videotape "She can wait because she has three years experience of working in day care center. A first year teacher can't wait." For teachers, fighting gives children opportunities for experiences, to learn feelings, to know each other deeply, and to make friends. Kumagai-sensei told me:

> This is the big difference between preschool teachers and parents. Watching (*mimamoru*) and waiting *(matsu)* is very difficult for parents sometimes. Of course, it's ideal if parents also can watch and wait. I think

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if parents knew what happened to their children in preschool, they

couldn't stand it, especially, their first child or when their children are

very young.

Teachers give children a sense of *mimamorareru*, of being watched. A

common metaphor used by Japanese early childhood educators is that children are

like budding plants who are nurtured by their teachers' watchful eyes – *machi no*

hoiku.

Giving Children Time to Develop

When I asked Morita-sensei about Nao's crying in the fighting scene, she

explained to me:

Her birthday is in February [note: the Japanese school year starts in April

and ends in March]. In addition, she came here only from last February.

Other children came here when they were one or two years old. So it can

be said that she was a new child at that moment [when the research team

videotaped her classroom]. But she has been changed a lot since she came

here and she would be different if you came back later this year. That's

why I let them fight. Nao was crying but she tried to pull the teddy bear

back.

Morita-sensei thinks about the value of her non-intervention from a long-term

perspective, in terms of child development. She has seen Nao's progress in social

skills over the time she been at Komatsudani. And she knows that Nao has

another eighteen months in her classroom continue her development (at

Komatsudani as at many other Japanese preschools teachers stay with the same

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group of children for three years). Fukui-sensei in the original Preschool in Three

Cultures study said she could be patient with Hiroki, who was constantly

misbehaving, because she would have him as her student for another two years,

and that he was gradually improving. Preschool teachers can wait and watch

because they have this long perspective. One of the Hoikuen teachers in Tokyo

said after watching the Madoka youchien video: "This is difficult! How can we

know children well enough to watch them?" For her, it is difficult to watch the

children in the video in a meaningful way (to *mimamoru*) since she does not have

enough time to know these children and to take a long perspective. Or perhaps she

is suggesting that is more difficult for yochien teachers, who have children in their

class for only two years, to their students as well as can hoikuen teachers who

often know children from infancy onwards.

The Cultural Meaning of Waiting (*Matsu*)

Dictionaries define *matsu* as spending time to welcome, to treat, or to

prepare. *Matsu* has a positive meaning. Japanese preschool teachers use "*matsu*"

to mean not just "to wait" but also "to anticipate" and "to look forward to."

Teachers use the word *matsu* frequently, is such phrases as "We trust children so

we can wait", or "We believe in children, so we can wait." This is different from

the western notion of waiting, which often carries a meaning that is at least

partially negative as in the phrase, "I can't wait." This phrase is used to express

eager anticipation, which is positive; but it also implies frustration. *Matsu* as well

sometimes can have a negative feeling, but the difference I want to point to here is

how Japanese preschool teachers almost always use "*matsu*" positively. Japanese

preschool teachers use to *matsu* to emphasize a sense of loneliness, which as discussed in Chapter 2, is a positively valenced emotion. It has implies trust and a connection with people. This is not only trust in others but also confidence in yourself, in the sense that you trust your judgment.

The Time Needed to Learn to "*Mimamoru*"

I need to make clear that a Japanese teacher's non-intervention in a children's fight does not constitute her giving up responsibility, being passive, or not taking fighting seriously. Even if she seems to be doing nothing she is watching and observing children's fighting very carefully and deciding whether she should let them fight or if the particular altercation is one where she needs to intervene. As Morita-sensei stated:

> When there's a fight among children, I watch and try to decide if they are really attempting to hurt each other, or if it is rough play. It is sometimes hard to tell. If it looks like it's getting too rough or it might get out of control, I tell them to be less rough, but I don't tell them to stop.

As Morita-sensei acknowledges, it is often difficult to tell when intervention is necessary. She needs to know the children well enough to anticipate when and where a situation has the potential to become dangerous or to spin out of control. To practice *mimamoru* and not intervene requires teachers not only to know the children well, but also to learn how to control their own desire to act to bring rapid resolution to a tense situation. As a teacher told me: "I couldn't wait when I was young (when I was new), but now I could wait." Another said: " I can do *gaman* now. But I couldn't *gaman* when I was young (when I was new). *Gaman*

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means patience, tolerance, or endurance. Teachers often describe their desire to step in quickly but then they say, "*gaman-suru* ("I hold myself back and endure it"). Morita-sensei is willing to hold back and take some risk of a child being hurt because she sees greater risk in intervening when it is not necessary, namely, the risk of taking away an opportunity for children to work out issues on their own. She views fighting not as a problem, but as a natural and necessary part of young children's social development. As a preschool director in Kyoto, Kumagai-sensei explained to me:

> The teacher should not to be a judge. If a teacher would be a judge and say, "You are right or you are wrong," it would be easy [to resolve a conflict]. But then there is no room for children to think on their own. Children should grow up in a gray zone [in contrast to a world that is all black and white, that is morally over-simplified]. Teachers pick the growing bud if they intervene in children's fighting.

Kumagai-sensei then adds, "But it takes a long time, though." Yoshizawa-sensei, the previous Komatsudani director, told me, "If a person can tell the difference between a real fight and a rough fight, this would be a real "caring" professional." He then added: "It takes at least five years." There are many Japanese proverbs that use the phrase "three years." For example, *ishino ue nimo sannen* (it takes three years at least to get used to sitting on a stone—be patient"), *agofuri sannen* (you need at least three years only for learning how to use your chin in order to play flute—"it takes time and energy to go deep into things), and *momokuri sannen kaki hachi nen* (it takes time to see our result). All these proverbs use

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"three years," to imply "a long time." All of these proverbs have an optimistic, positive feeling that if you wait/take at least three years you can achieve something. Therefore, "three years" implies the need for effort, but also that the effort will be rewarded. Yoshizawa-sensei says that it takes five years to become a good teacher, rather than the expected three, which emphasizes the difficulty of the task. At the same time, this phrase tells us how Yoshizawa-sensei thinks fighting is important to the task of becoming the kind of teacher who can make distinctions among children's fights and thereby learn how to strategically not intervene and give children opportunities for social development.

Amae and *Mimamoru*

Mimamoru is not used to describe self-monitoring. It is applied only to keeping an eye on other people. We often hear the phrase, *Mimamotte kudasai* ("Please keep watching and guarding me"). Do only younger ones say to older ones, "*mimamotte kudasai*"? I suggest that what matters is not the age but rather that the person who does the *mimamoru* is supposed to be at least potentially able to help someone with something they can't do on their own. Preschool teachers know how to solve social problems better than children do, so they can do *mimamoru,* because *mamoru* has the meaning of guard or protect. As a result, a lot of times, the senior or more competent member of a dyad will see to someone more junior: "*Mimamotteta"* ("I'll watch or keep an eye on you") and a younger one will say to an older one: "*Mimamottetekudasai*" ("Please watch/keep an eye on me"). These usages connect *mimamoru* to *amae*, which I described in Chapter 2. *Amae* is a common Japanese word that means acting in a way that produces in

others a desire to offer nurturance or help. *Amae* is seen not only in action but also in what people say and how people talk because it is a psychological structure that allows people to depend on each other. *Mimamoru* is the way to ask people to help, but not in a direct way. As Bakhtin suggests in *Art and Answerability*, in his discussion of the need for others to "consumate" us, we cannot truly see ourselves objectively even when we look in the mirror. We cannot totally be objective to ourselves. We cannot see ourselves against the larger context of our lives. In this sense, *mimamoru* implies the notion that people need others to watch them. Or we can say that we need others to help us watch ourselves.

Emptiness in Preschool Teacher as *Mimamoru*

What do teachers think about while doing *mimamoru*? In order to do *mimamoru*, what do teachers need to know and to learn? One thing would be the ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty and to entertain alternative explanations. To refer to the ability to stand uncertainty, Japanese preschool teachers use the emic term of *sunao*. *Sunao* often is translated into English as "obedient." However, interviews I have conducted with Japanese early childhood educators suggest that *sunao* also carries the meanings of "open-minded," "truthful," and "open-hearted cooperation." One of the scenes in the Madoka video shows a teacher intervening in a children's fight, pressing both children to tell her who started it and not accepting the explanation of one boy who protested his innocence. A preschool director in Tokyo said about this scene: "If she did not see the beginning of the fight, why she didn't just listen to the child's explanation and accept it. If she did see it, why didn't she tell the children that she saw it? To

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be a good teacher it is important to be *sunao*." White and LeVine (1986) identify

sunao as one of the key terms Japanese mothers list in their definition of an *iiko* (a

good child). *Sunao* has also been identified as a characteristic of children valued

in Japanese preschools. I suggest that *sunao* is also a key characteristic of a good

teacher. For a teacher to be s*unao* means listening to what children say without

judgment and reciprocating children's open-minded, open-hearted sincerity.

Azuma describes this stance not as *sunao* or open-mindedness but as

"empty mindedness." I see a connection between the way Japanese early

childhood educators use the term *sunao* and Azuma's notion of empty

mindedness. Azuma (1994) suggests that true understanding is impossible if one

does not make his mind clean and empty when listening to others. *Mimamoru*

requires teachers to have *sunao* and empty mindedness. This idea is consistent

with the psychoanalyst's skill of attentive listening, anthropology's attitude of

non-judgmental cultural relativism and openness to emic concepts, textual

interpretive approaches, such as that practiced by Bakhtinian, and the aesthetics of

Zen. Doi (1988) mentions in his book that a psychoanalyst should be just

listening, and not making judgments, and letting the patient talk, and talking

mostly to complement the patient's free association. A core belief of anthropology

is not imposing your own values and etic notions on the natives that you study.

Anthropologists should be open to emic categories and not make judgments.

Bakhtin emphasizes the value of seeing multiple interpretations, and multiple

meanings in a text. Zen has long emphasized the notion of "empty your mind,"

(*satoru*) as a key to becoming a mature person. Empty mind is different from

ignorance. *Mushin* is a related Zen term. *Mushin* has two Chinese characters: *mu* is nothing and *shin* is mind. Therefore *mushin* means making your mind empty. The psychoanalyst, Bakhtinian, anthropologist, and Zen master all have their own terms to describe their skills of tolerating ambiguity in order to be a good specialist in their field. I am suggesting that the parallel emic concept practiced by Japanese preschool teachers is *mimamoru.* A good teacher should be flexible, tolerate ambiguity, keep her mind empty, not have fixed ideas, accept ideas from children, who are free thinkers, and notice and adjust her behaviors to the particular child and the context. As they teach longer and longer, they get wiser and more knowledgeable, but being a good teacher should never become a fixed idea. Rather, good teaching requires intuition and an unconscious level of teaching, something perhaps close to what Bourdieu calls habitus. He defined habitus as a certain behavior or belief that becomes part of society's structure, when the original purpose of that behavior or belief can no longer be recalled and becomes socialized into individuals of that culture. *Mimamoru* can be said to be a core habitus of Japanese teaching.

Chapter 5

THE JAPANESE HANDS-OFF APPROACH TO CURRICULUM

GUIDELINES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

AS A FORM OF CULTURAL PRACTICE

Introduction

This chapter explores what I call the "hands-off" approach to curriculum

policy in early childhood education of the Japanese Ministry of Education,

Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). My argument is first that early

childhood education policy in Japan is less aggressively directed from above than

it is in many other countries and second that this non-directive approach is

consistent with core cultural beliefs of Japanese early childhood education

including, especially, *mimamoru* (watching and caring).

In Japan, there are two main types of provision in early childhood

education: *youchien* (kindergartens for children aged 3-6) and *hoikuen* (daycare

centers for infants through six year olds). They are governed by different

ministries (*youchien* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and

Technology, hereafter MEXT and *hoikuen* by the Ministry of Health, Labour, and

Welfare) and have different mandates and guidelines. As Imoto (2007) points out,

there is a distinction historically and structurally between *youchien* (幼稚園)and

hoikuen (保育園). Ben-Ari (2005) suggests that *youchien* and *hoikuen* follow a

similar curriculum even though there are differences in philosophy and style. Peak

(1991) also finds that although *youchien* and *hoikuen* are controlled by different

agencies, they provide a basically similar learning experiences for the child.

Tobin (2010) argues that policy making, whether or not policy makers realize it or not, reflects the influence of socio-cultural factors. My paper follows in this ethnographic tradition of analyzing Japanese early childhood education policy. In this chapter, I focus only *youchien*. For various reasons, including the fact that *hoikuen* deal with health and nutrition concerns of infants, their guidelines are more explicit than are those of *youchien*. My focus is on the "The Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline" issued by MEXT.

Mimamoru as Cultural Belief and Practice

In interviews with Japanese teachers and directors I conducted on teachers' culturally implicit beliefs as an extension of and a follow up to Tobin, Hsueh, and Karasawa's 2009 *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study, I came to see the importance of *mimamoru* as a strategy that underlies many Japanese early childhood classroom practices. *Mi* literally means, "to watch;" *mamoru* means, "to guard." Together the words create a term that refers to a general Japanese pedagogical strategy of childcare I translate as "teaching by watching." In the preschool classroom this cultural logic of *mimamoru* takes the form of preschool teachers using a "hands-off" or low intervention approach to dealing with children's cognitive as well as social and emotional development.

An example of a *mimamoru* strategy teachers use with children is to hesitate to intervene in children's fighting, as described in a scene in *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* in which three girls pull and tug on a teddy bear and fall into a struggling heap on the floor. During this struggle, the only visible and audible reaction of the classroom teacher Morita-sensei is to call out from across

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the room: "*Kora Kora, Kora Kora*!" (which in English means something like "Hey"). When asked about this scene Morita-sensei explained that this is typical of her approach of watching children, and letting them know that they are being watched, but avoiding otherwise intervening, to give children the opportunity to experience complex social interactions and to work out their own solutions. By calling out "*Kora Kora*" during the fight Morita-sensei let them know that she was watching. Know that their teacher is watching them and that if the situation gets too rough or out of control the teacher is there to help them provides a sort of safety net for the children's interaction, providing the confidence and security they need to work things out on their own.

A preschool director I interviewed in Kyoto commented on Morita's strategy of watchful non-intervention when she watched the video: "She can wait because she has three years experience of working in a daycare center. A first year teacher can't wait like this. It takes a long time." Yoshizawa-sensei, Komatsudani's recently retired director, said: "You have to be a real caring professional to tell the difference between a real fight and rough and tumble play. It takes at least five years." The directors' emphasis on the time it takes for teachers to develop skill in using *mimamoru* with children suggests that they use a similar strategy of *mimamoru* with teachers, watching but not overly intervening as teachers over time develop their ability to hold back and scaffold children's social interactions.

When I asked how teachers come to be able to employ a strategy of *mimamoru* with their students, a preschool director in Tokyo responded: "By

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meeting a mentor (*onshi*). This sometimes happens before coming to the field, sometimes right after graduating from school, or sometimes in the middle of their carrier. But either way, it's crucial for teachers to meet a mentor to develop their professionalism." This comment is consistent with a belief that directors need to take a long point of view on teacher development, giving each teacher time and space to develop in her own way at her own pace. Directors support this development through watching and waiting, and allowing young teachers to learn from their more experienced co-workers. This stance of directors towards teachers has much in common with the way teachers deal with the development of children's ability to handle social interactions. Morita-sensei explained her non-intervention in the fight over the teddy bear by saying: "It would be quick and easy if I intervened in their fight. But then, I would take away from children an opportunity to grow up."

My argument is that *mimamoru* is a core component of a Japanese early childhood educational approach that gives young teachers as well as young children space and time to work things out on their own. Where do preschool teachers and directors learn this idea? We might expect such a central pedagogical idea to be articulated in The Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline (幼稚園教育要領), or other documents produced by MEXT. But the Guidelines say nothing directly about *mimamoru*, or about how this approach can be operationalized either as a strategy of staff development or in the classroom. When I asked Japanese preschool teachers and directors where the idea of *mimamoru* comes from, no one mentioned directives from the government

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ministries or from the early childhood education reforms. More generally, in the interviews with Japanese teachers and directors conducted in the *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study, there were scant mentions of the MEXT Guidelines and no comments to suggest that MEXT or any other government agency or professional organization provides direct pressures or directives to guide *yochien* practice. This stands out in contrast to the frequent mentions by Chinese practitioners of the National Kindergarten Reform Guidelines and by US practitioners of directives from No Child Left Behind on one hand and NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice on the other.

By describing the MEXT approach as "hands-off" and "less directed from above" I do not mean to give the impression that the result is chaos or to suggest that MEXT provides no guidance to *youchien* or that MEXT allows Japanese teachers and directors to do whatever they want. MEXT provides a clear philosophy, workshops and professional development, and evaluation system, but a culturally appropriate approach that is consistent with their underlying philosophy.

The Guideline document issued by MEXT is neither ambiguous nor equivoquating. Just the opposite, it presents a consistent philosophy of early childhood education that has been articulated and re-articulated by MEXT for more than sixty years (Akita, 2010; Oda, 2004). Nakatsubo et al (2009) suggest that one of the characteristics of Japanese kindergarten education is that the national guidelines established by MEXT provide a clear direction. Unlike the US government's "No Child Left Behind" and the National Association of Early

Childhood Education's "Developmentally Appropriate Practice," MEXT does not give a name to their approach. And yet the Guidelines present a consistent philosophy, one we can call child-centered and play-based and which Japanese preschool directors and early childhood education experts sometimes call *nobi nobi kyōiku* ("room to stretch" or "feel at ease"), *jiyu asobi* ("free play"), or "and." The MEXT Guidelines from one iteration to the next provide a clear direction and a goal to reach for, but do not directly proscribe practices that should be employed to achieve those goals. The Guidelines do not provide specific standards or learning outcomes, as do the guidelines that govern early childhood education in many countries.

MEXT also give directors and teachers direction, in the form of workshops and professional development (MEXT, 2009). This is much more common in public preschools than private ones, which means that MEXT has more direct influence over curriculum and pedagogy in the public preschools, where teachers are more professionalized than in the private ones where there is more rapid teacher turnover and where directors have more latitude to develop their own sometimes idiosyncratic approaches (Holloway, 2000; Tobin et al 2009).

MEXT have a mechanism for evaluating the fidelity with which schools and teachers are implementing the goals of the Guidelines, but this is a self-evaluation system, not like in China, for example as Tobin et al (2009) point out, where preschools and teachers receive annual quality ratings from the government based on visits by outside experts, or in the United States where preschools' have

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periodic accreditation visits by outside evaluators (NAEYC, 2011). The approach from MEXT is not to force preschools to follow their guidelines but rather to encourage them to do so in their own way.

How we can explain this relative absence of direct, top-down direction and pressure in Japanese early childhood education? My hypothesis is that the government is doing a version of *mimamoru* with *youchien* directors and teachers, watching and waiting and giving them time and space to figure out their own solutions to best practice in preschools, much as directors do with teachers, and teachers do with children. This is an example of a deep structural pattern running through Japanese culture that can be found in the domains both of policy and practice in Japanese early childhood education.

The Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline; 幼稚園教育要領

The Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline issued by MEXT is a thirteen page document broken into three chapters: General Provisions, Aims and Contents, and Points for Consideration in the Formulation of Instruction Plans. For example, the section on "Language," in the Chapter on Aims and Contents, is two pages long, and includes three aims, ten contents, and four ways of dealing with the contents. The entirety of the section on how to approach the contents reads:

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to language.

(1) Considering the fact that people are able to acquire language gradually through interacting, conveying their emotions and intentions, and listening to the responses of others, children should be encouraged to experience and enjoy exchanging words in their

relationships with teachers and other children.
(2) Teachers should gradually foster in children the ability to understand what people are saying and to communicate in words, by encouraging children to communicate their own thoughts in words and to listen to what teachers and other children are saying with interest and attention.
(3) Teachers should encourage children to create rich images and develop an
understanding of language by allowing them to fully experience the joy of relating the picture books, stories, etc., to their own experiences, using their imagination and creativity.
(4) Teachers should encourage children to experience the pleasure and enjoyment of conveying thoughts and feelings through written words, and to develop an interest in and curiosity about written words in their everyday life.

This is as close as the Guideline comes to practical suggestions for teachers. Since it was first issued in 1947, the Guideline has been revised every 10 years. The first revision, in 1956, introduced six areas (health, social, nature, language, music/rhythm, and art/drawing/craft). The guideline was revised again in 1964, 1989, 1998, and 2008. In 50 years, across six revisions, the Guideline has not been changed dramatically, and remains abstract and indirect.

Evidence of a Strategy of *Mimamoru*

I interviewed Kuroda-sensei, a MEXT senior administrator who served on the committee for reforming the kindergarten guidelines, and Takeda-sensei, a director of public preschool in Tokyo:

Hayashi: Why is the guideline abstract and indirect?

Kuroda-sensei: It is because the government should not intervene in education.

Hayashi: Why don't you write specific practical suggestions?

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Kuroda-sensei: For early childhood education, we do have direction goals, not achievement goals. For example, language, we don't care if children become able to write letters or not. The goal is we want children to be interested in letters. Actually, the guideline is detailed and it follows the law.

Hayashi: Since it is detailed, isn't it possible to write them down more specifically?

Kuroda-sensei: MEXT believes that there are a lot of ways that teachers can develop, for instance, children's social development. MEXT, therefore, does not want to write specific things in the guideline. But we do have the books of cases, depending on areas.

Kuroda-sensei says nothing in the interview to suggest that the absence of strong guidelines reflects the cultural logic of *mimamoru*. In fact, he disagreed with this interpretation, saying that the absence of greater specificity is due not to cultural but to structural reasons such as "The government should not intervene in education" and "This follows the law." Where are the implications of Kuroda-sensei's rejection of my cultural interpretation? Do policy insiders need to be aware of such deeper patterns for them to be plausible explanations of their actions? What would count as evidence of *mimamoru* at the policy level?

Hayashi: Do you think that preschool teachers and directors are satisfied with these abstract and loose guidelines?

Kuroda-sensei: Well, they might be happy or they might not be happy. They might be confused. Therefore, there are a lot of books about how to

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interpret the kindergarten curriculum guideline. It is difficult to understand the Guidelines.

In this interview, Kuroda-sensei admits that the brevity and lack of specificity of the Guidelines may confuse some teachers, and yet he does not argue for the need or appropriateness of MEXT providing greater clarity or direction. In the paper, "Current Challenges of Kindergaten (*Youchien*) Education in Japan," Oda and Mori (2006) suggest that there has been as struggle from the beginning between those who wanted Guidelines more like elementary school guidelines in being specific about learning outcomes and broken down by content areas and those who argued for less specific guidelines that would emphasize child development over content knowledge and skill, an approach championed by Kurahashi, a founding father of Japanese early childhood education:

> Some, at that time, argued that the guidelines should be called *Yochien Gakushu Shidou Yoryo* ("Kindergarten Course of Study")[1]. The title, however, was not adopted. The term *Youchien Kyoiku Yoryo* (Kindergarten Curriculum Guideline) was used, reflecting the belief that because young children develop differently from one another, and because of their incomplete development, practice should emphasize their natural, everyday lives (Oda, 2004, p.79).

Oda and Mori (2006) point out with regret early childhood educators' increasing desire over time for more subject matter-oriented curriculum:

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[1] In November, 2010, after I wrote the first draft of this paper, MEXT changed the translation of *Yochien Gakushu Shidou Yoryo* to "the course of study about early childhood education and care."

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Early childhood educators moved away from Kurahashi's education philosophy of constructing a curriculum that guided children based on play and theme-based activities. Early childhood educators began to view the six areas as subjects and to emphasize providing specific activities designed to help children acquire specific knowledge and skills. Although kindergarten educators still paid lip service to stressing children's everyday activities, reducing the curriculum into six areas essentially converted the everyday life-oriented curriculum into the subject matter-oriented curriculum of the elementary school (p.2).

While Oda and Mori's paper does not explicitly support my hypothesis that Japanese early childhood education policy makers employ a strategy of *mimamoru* with practitioners, their argument is not inconsistent with this hypothesis, as they emphasizes the need for early childhood education policy makers to resist demands from teachers and directors and politicians for more explicit, elementary school like directives and for issuing a "course of study" for kindergartens.

The interview I conduced with preschool Director Takeda-sensei provides a director's view of MEXT's non-directive policy approach:

Hayashi: What do you think about the national curriculum guideline for kindergarten?

Takeda-sensei: It follows the law, therefore, it's short.

Hayashi: Are you happy to have that short curriculum guide?

Takeda-sensei: I think the short curriculum means that MEXT is saying to

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us, "Please follow at least these things, and the rest is up to you." (or "and for the rest, we rely on you"). Compulsory education is almost the same everywhere but early childhood education is highly varied. The guideline is in a way a "Bible" that Directors and preschools interpret on their own.

Her explanation implies that by giving only minimal guidance, MEXT gives preschool directors and teachers latitude to develop their own approaches and as a result to take more responsibility for implementing the spirit of the guidelines and this approach is more effective than attempting to legislate and enforce directives from above. This explanation is consistent with my *mimamoru* hypothesis.

The non-directiveness of the guidelines allows each preschool to develop its own culture and gives the directors and their staff the ability to develop curriculum approaches that make sense for their local communities. Ishigaki (1999) emphasizes kindergartens' autonomy: "Each kindergarten should maintain its originality and make suitable adjustments to its curriculum in accordance with the law and the guidelines, re-responding to the mental and physical development of children, and the conditions of the kindergarten and local community (p. 26)." The non-directiveness of the Guidelines both supports and reflects the strength of preschool directors. The majority of Japanese preschools are private programs (MEXT, 2009), with strong, long-serving directors who also often own the preschool. In public preschools, the power of directors comes from the fact that they are government employees with job stability, who while moving over their careers from school to school,

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stay in the field for many years. In both types of programs the loose guidelines empower directors and in this way allow for stability and for resisting panicky calls from politicians and parents for a more pushed down academic curriculum.

Mimamoru is two sided, as to function is requires the participation of the person who is being watched and waited for as well as the person (or agency) doing the watching and waiting. Therefore, if *youchien* directors say that MEXT is doing *mimamoru* toward them, this would be strong evidence for the cultural nature of this policy practice, even if it is not the explanation offered by the policy makers. Policy is not only a top down practice. It is also a larger cultural set of beliefs and practices that tie together policy makers with those, like preschool directors, who are charged with implementing policy.

The fact that there are specific guidelines for primary (elementary) schools in Japan raises the question of why not for preschools? One possible explanation is that *mimamoru* is a cultural belief and practice that while found across many domains of Japanese society, is particularly well suited to *youchien*, which historically and in the present day see their mission as primarily one of children's social and emotional development. Tobin et al (2009) write that Japanese preschools' central goal is to make Japanese children Japanese. This goal is seen as best achieved through "natural" means, providing a natural environment, which means creating/building a social world where children can experience the kind of social complexity missing for them in contemporary Japan.

Oda (2004) and Akita (2010) suggest the Japanese early childhood education curriculum reflects core ideas that can be traced back to the influence of Sozo Kurahashi (1882-1955), the founder of the "everyday-life-oriented curriculum." His slogan was, "For children's everyday life, in children's everyday life, and to children's everyday life," and his central message was that early childhood educators should carefully observe children's everyday lives. His philosophy emphasized the importance of cultivating young children's feelings, interests, and motivations by providing children with a supportive, stimulating environment.

In their 2006 paper, Oda and Mori emphasize the significance of the choice by Japanese early childhood policy makers to use the term "guideline" (*yoryo*) rather than "course of study" *(gakushu shidou yoryo). (Gakushu* means learning and *shidou* is teaching.) While most early childhood practitioners and policy makers reject the term *gakushu shidou yoryo* which they feel is too (elementary) school-like, they are comfortable with the term *kyoiku*'s, which is usually translated into English as "education," but which, like the original meaning of "education," carries a meaning that goes well beyond schooling and the acquisition of academic knowledge. As a preschool director in Kyoto explained to us:

> The term "*kyo*" in *kyoiku* refers to education. But it is important to
> remember that *kyoiku* also has within it the term "*iku*," which means "to
> cultivate."

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The decision by MEXT to use the term *kyoiku* (教育) rather than *gakushu sidou* (学習指導*)* for the kindergarten guidelines reflects an acknowledgement that the central goal of early childhood education in Japan is social and emotional development, and not only education narrowly defined. Preschool in Japan is in seen primarily as a site for Japanese children to become happy, socially well adjusted, and Japanese. It is difficult to have specific curriculum guidelines or directives for reaching these goals. Countries often have explicit education guidelines, but not explicit guidelines for enculturation. Top-down policy directives are usually about how to achieve mathematics and literacy goals and hygiene standards, and not about such "softer things" as enculturation, social and emotional development, and the development of the self. Some countries have national guidelines for early childhood education that emphasize preschool as a key site for fostering young children's identity and the development of self. The early years curricula in England and Australia include a focus on social and emotional development, and on the development of the self (DCFS, 2008; Commonwealth of Australia, 2009). For example, one of the five desired outcomes in the new national 0-5 Australian curriculum is that "Children have a strong sense of well being" and another is that "Children have a strong sense of identity." National policies and guidelines for early childhood education sometimes state broad goals for "softer" domains of development, but it is not common for such guidelines to offer a clear scope and sequence for these softer domains, as they more often do for mathematics and reading and for hygiene and safety standards.

A related cultural explanation for my observation that we can find *mimamoru* operating in *youchien* policy as well as in practice would be that there is a metonymic linking at work of Japanese early childhood education with Japanese childhood. There is a strong cultural value in Japanese early childhood education on "child-likeness" (*kodomo rashii*), and the idea that children should be free to be childish, which means free to play, to experience emotions, and to explore things (Tobin et al, 2009). *Yochien* (幼稚園) has a Chinese character meaning "garden." The notion of a "children's garden" carries with it in Japanese, as in the original German term "kindergarten," the notion of a place that is free and natural. Just as kindergartens should be natural and free and allow children to explore, ministries regulating kindergartens should allow kindergarten teachers and directors a similar freedom.

Another cultural explanation would be that Japanese culture and society is vertical, but not top-down, and therefore that there is a strong cultural tradition that can be found in many domains of supervisors giving those under them latitude to make their own decisions and to operationalize general directives in their own ways. Studies have suggested that a characteristically Japanese management style is for bosses to not give specific directives and instead to put responsibility on their employees to search for creative ways to implement institutional goals (Rohlen, 1989).

Conclusion

In each of above speculative explanations I see the workings of what Tobin et al (2009) call "unmarked beliefs and practices (p. 242)." The boss not

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give specific directions to his employees; the kindergarten teacher hesitating to intervene in her students' disputes; the kindergarten director giving her teachers latitude; and MEXT being non-directive with preschools all can be seen as examples of the same implicit cultural logic: the belief that by not being too directive, directors, teachers, and students are encouraged to find their own solutions, not individually but collectively. When teachers, supervisors, and policy makers hold back, and use *mimamoru* (watching and waiting), rather than using a heavy-handed, directive management style, students, teachers, and directors take more responsibility and are more motivated.

Tobin (2011) writes "beliefs and practices that are implicit are less open to scrutiny, criticism, and reform efforts than are beliefs and practices that are mandated in government documents, written down in textbooks, taught in schools of education, given a formal name, and otherwise made explicit (p. 24)." The strategy of *mimamoru* is not written in the MEXT kindergarten guidelines or in teacher education textbooks; rather, as I have argued in this chapter, *mimamoru* is a deep structural pattern that can be found in the domains both of policy and practice in Japanese early childhood education.

In his paper on class size in Japan (1987), Tobin et al report that when they asked *youchien* administrators the reason for having high student/teacher ratios, most said the explanation was economic, and that even with twenty-five children per teacher, *youchien* were struggling to make a profit. But Tobin et al. argued that such pragmatic justifications are not adequate, as they pointed out that preschools in the US also struggle financially, and yet early childhood educators

in the US consider ratios of eight children per adult to be very high. Tobin et al. conclude that even if Japanese early childhood educators are not aware of the workings of cultural factors, that Japanese *youchien* policies and practices reflect cultural beliefs and practices. My argument is parallel to Tobin's: Because *mimamoru* as belief and practice is largely implicit, when I asked Kuroda-sensei and Takeda-sensei why the guideline is so loose, their first response was, "Because this is the law." But an anthropological approach would be to look for deeper cultural beliefs beneath the laws. Laws, like curriculum guidelines, are surface features of a culture that need to be connected to deeper cultural beliefs and logics.

Chapter 6

THE INTERACTION OF JAPANESE AND DEAF CULTURAL

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN A JAPANESE DEAF

KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the strength and breadth of Japanese preschool

teachers' cultural practices and beliefs by comparing pedagogical practices used

by preschools teachers at Meisei Gakuen, a Deaf signing preschool in Tokyo, with

the practices of teachers at Madoka Yochien and Komatsudani Hoikuen, the two

non-deaf preschools that were the focal schools in the earlier study, *Preschool in

Three Cultures Revisited (2009)*. The material I call on in this chapter comes from

a larger study, *Deaf Kindergartens in Three Cultures: Japan, France, and the

United States*.

Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited documented and analyzed core

cultural practices of Japanese preschool teachers. A core conclusion of this book

was to highlight the importance of what the authors call "implicit cultural beliefs

and practices," beliefs and practices that are not mandated by the ministry of

education, taught in teacher preparation programs, or found in textbooks. Instead

they are passed down through on the job learning and embedded in the larger

cultures in which schools are located.

I suggest that many of these cultural practices described in *Preschool in

Three Cultures Revisited* and that I have described in the previous chapters are

also found at Meisei Gakuen. The presence of these same practices in these two

very different kinds of Japanese preschools, serving very different populations of students, with teachers who had very different forms of professional development, provides further evidence for the power of implicit cultural beliefs and practices.

Within comparative education there is an essential role to be played by anthropologists in providing cultural explanations for a country's approach to teaching. I am not saying that culture can explain everything, just that it can explain some things about educational beliefs and practices, things that cannot be explained in other ways.

Why is Meisei Gakuen a valuable test case for my argument? It might seem odd to focus my argument about shared national Japanese educational beliefs on a deaf signing school, especially considering that Meisei Gakuen is in fact the *only* deaf signing school in Japan. But I suggest that Meisei Gakuen is a valuable test case precisely because it functions largely independently of hearing schools and hearing pedagogy and the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) administration. MEXT issues the guideline for special education, (*Tokubetsu Shien Gakou Gakusyu Shido Youryo).* Meisei, however, has been able to follow another set of guidelines "*kouzou kaikaku toku seido*," which allows their school to be free from the MEXT guidelines. I could even put it more strongly: By employing a signing approach to deaf education, Meisei is operating in a way that is contrary to the MEXT guidelines for deaf education. Another factor that makes Meisei different from hearing and oral method deaf preschools is that most of the teachers at Meisei Gakuen did not attend teacher preparation programs. This supports my argument

that if I find the same beliefs and practices at Meisei Gakuen that I find at hearing preschools, this is strong evidence for what I am calling the power of implicit beliefs and practices over explicit guidelines and training.

This chapter differs from the video-cued multivocal ethnography method used in the *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study as I analyze video clips from Meisei Gakuen and the hearing preschools, treating the video clips as kind of data, as well as interviewing cues. I present side-by-side analyses of clips from Meisei Gakuen and the hearing schools. The method is therefore a mix of vide-cued ethnographic interviewing approach and visual ethnography. I use the video clips from Komatsudani, Madoka, and Meisei, and the comments from the interviews I conducted with Japanese hearing teachers and the teachers at Meisei Gakuen.

The Tug of War at Meisei

"Tug of war" (*tsunahiki*) is a very popular game among Japanese children, a game one can see being played at just about any preschool or elementary school. In the video the research team made of a day in the kindergarten class at Meisei Gakuen, out on the playground during recess, just before a tug of war begins, a four-year-old girl, Mika, throws down the end of the rope and stalks away, saying (in JSL): "It's not fair. My team will lose. The other team has more players on their side." Satoshi, a five-year-old boy on the other side, comes over to Mika and vigorously disagrees with her assessment, arguing: "But your team has Kurihara-sensei. She is big and strong. And my team has many girls on our side who are weak." As this argument continues for five

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minutes or so, another four-year-old girl, Chika approaches to try to say something to Mika. Satoshi pushes her away and angrily tells her not to interrupt. Chika, with tears in her eyes, walks away and then signs, "I'm sad." As Mika and Satoshi continue their discussion, Chika comes over to Ikeda-sensei, the head teacher of the preschool class, who has been patiently waiting and watching during this whole interaction. Ikeda-sensei explains to Chika that Satoshi has a tendency to dominate conversations and to say too much, not giving others a chance to express themselves. Eventually Satoshi finishes his discussion with Mika and says he needs to apologize to Chika for having pushed her away. But instead of apologizing, he tells her that she should not have interrupted. Chika responds by explaining that she had only wanted to say "one small thing" and that he had hurt her feelings. Ikeda-sensei, sitting just a few feet away, waits and watches this whole interaction, nodding in approval as Chika makes her points. Finally, the tug of war begins (and, as Satoshi predicted, Kurihara-sensei's team wins).

On the day we videotaped, my first reaction was to see the tug-of-war scene as very Japanese. One could say that I should not be surprised to discover that practices in a kindergarten in a school for the deaf would look Japanese, in the sense of looking like activities in hearing schools, because deaf schools in Japan are still Japanese. But on the other hand, it is surprising considering the fact that neither of the two kindergarten teachers at Meisei Gakuen graduated from a traditional teacher education program and the overall pedagogical approach of the school centers on learning sign language and Deaf culture.

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At Meisei Gakuen, I observed many of the same practices and beliefs I have observed and described at non-deaf preschools, beliefs and practices that I have described and analyzed in the previous chapters. At Meisei Gakuen, I again find an emphasis on the development of emotions; on mixed-aged interactions; on the value of teacher's strategic non-intervention in children's disputes (*mimamoru*); and on the *gyarari* and *seken no me*. Each of these emic Japanese pedagogical notions comes into play in the Meisei tug of war scene. During this whole interaction, which lasts about 15 minutes, six or seven other children from the preschool class, who are not directly participating in the discussion, perform the role of what Kumagai-sensei calls the *gyarari*, and what I would, following anthropological studies of Japan, word call *seken no me*—the eyes of society.

How can I explain finding such a similarity of beliefs and practices across such different kinds of preschools? How are these and other emic practices reproduced from school to school and passed on from generation to generation? Is it through educational experience teachers had as children? Through apprenticeship learning? A first year teacher in the preschool class at Meisei, Sawamura-sensei, told me that he has learned to teach the way he does mostly from working under Ikeda-sensei's tutelage. But where did Ikeda-sensei learn to teach as she does? I suggest that the answer to this question lies not only in apprenticeship learning, and in explicitly taught or government mandated pedagogies, but also and perhaps more importantly in deeper Japanese cultural patterns, deeper in the sense of more fundamental or underlying, in a structuralist sense, and more general than just educational beliefs and practice.

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Japanese Cultural Practices and Beliefs at Meisei Gakuen

In the Meisei Gakuen video, as in the videos made at Komatsudani Hoikuen and Madoka Yochien, there are scenes of morning opening, lunch, free play, and departure. I see many similar practices in the Komatsudani, Madoka, and Meisei videos that can be explained by suggesting that the teachers at the three schools share deeper beliefs about teaching. These practices include *machi no hoiku* (a hesitation of teachers to intervene quickly or heavily in children's fights and other social interactions); *mimamoru* (a pedagogy of watching and waiting); *tatte wari kyoiku* (mixed-age interactions); *toban* (giving authority to classroom monitors); an emphasis on *omoiyari* (empathy) and the expression of emotions; on *shakai seikatsu* (social interaction); on *kejime* (marking contextual differences and expecting different behaviors for different contexts); and on the functioning of the *gyarari* (of children who observe other children's social interactions as a Japanese cultural form of what Lave and Wenger (1991) call "legitimate peripheral participation").

Kejime

Kejime is a common Japanese expression that refers to the process of identifying contextual differences and expecting different behaviors for these different contexts. Tobin (1994) also suggests that learning *kejime* is related with *omote* and *ura* (front and rear), *tatemae* and *honnne* (appearance and real things), and *uchi* and *soto* (home and outside), which are mentioned by other scholars as characteristic of Japanese sense of self. Japanese cultural practices of *kejime* seen in preschools include not just taking off shoes in the entrance hall (*genkan*), but

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also changing ones comportment as one changes contexts (for example when the morning opening ends and free play begins), and changing levels of politeness of language and body language during short formal periods of the day including *aisatsu* (morning greetings) and *itadakimasu* (pre-lunch expression of gratitude). I can find evidence of this cultural practice of *kejime* in the videos shot in all three preschools, Komatsudani, Madoka, and Meisei. In Figure 28, 29, and 30, I see that children change their shoes from outside shoes to inside shoes.

Figure 28. Meisei Entrance

Figure 29. Komatsudani Entrance

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Figure 30. Madoka Entrance

Figures 31, 32, and 33 are of scenes showing children saying "*itadakimasu*" before eating lunch. *Itadakimasu* is a pre-meal expression of gratitude. This is a moment in which children change their level of politeness, a *kejime* moment. Linguistically, *itadakimasu* is a very polite way of saying, "Eat." There are three levels of politeness in the Japanese language and most verbs have three different forms. The form of the very people should use depends on the situation, who you are, and who you are talking with. *Itadaku* is a verb of the *kenjyou* form, in which you put yourself down a level from another person in order to show your respect. People use this form when they are the people about to take action. Just before lunch time in all three preschools, children use the *kenjyou* by *itadakimasu* to show respect to others just before they take the action of eating. In the Madoka video, just as lunch is beginning the children say to their teacher, "*Meshiagare*," which can be translated as "Please eat." *Meshiagare* is a verb of the *sonkei* form, in which you show your respect directly to others. When children say to their teacher, "Please eat," they use the *sonkei* because the person

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who is about to take action (who is about to eat), is their *sensei* and therefore by definition (the characters for sensei can be read as "born before") of a higher level of status.

Figure 31. Meisei "*Itadakimasu*"

Figure 32. Madoka "*Itadakimasu*"

Figure 33. Komatsudani "*Itadakimasu*"

Saying "*Itadakimasu*" at lunch is an important opportunity for young children to learn *kejime* in two ways. It marks a space/moment that lets children

know that a context has changed by having everyone say a greeting together before eating rather than everyone just starting to eat on their own, and by employing a more polite speech register.

Helping by Offering the Minimal Amount of Help Needed

During morning opening Erika, who is the daily *toban* (helper), is having a hard time. As other children try to help her, there is a discussion among the children and teacher about how much help to offer, as they sign phrases including: "Let her do it," "You may want to help her now," and "Does she need help now?" This scene is consistence with the mixed-age play scene in the Komatsudani video where teachers gently help the older children figure out when and how much help to provide younger children (Figure 34 and 35).

Figure 34. "Wait, does she need help now?"

Figure 35. A baby's first steps

In Figures 36 to Figure 41 I see a child giving more help than is wanted by using touch to attempt to get the younger child to do what they want them to. In Figure 36, a five-year-old boy (in blue pants) tries to help a baby to walk. He tries to hold the baby's hand (Figure 36), but the baby refuses (Figure 37).

Figure 36. Trying to offer assistance

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Figure 37. Getting rejected

In Figure 38 I see a five-year-old girl trying to feed one-year-old girl some cake with a spoon, but the one-year-old rejects her by turning her head away.

Figure 38. Rejecting being fed

At Madoka, Erika (in a red shirt), the helper, is supposed to say to the class, "Morning Opening Finished." Takuya tries to help her make the correct signs first by reaching to touch her hands (Figure 39), and then by demonstrating with his hands (Figure 40). However, Erika turns her head away (Figure 41).

Figure 39. Takuya tries to move Erika's hands

Figure 40. Takuya demonstrates a sign

Figure 41. Erika turning away

These series of images from three preschools shows the process of children learning how to offer enough, but not too much help, by making mistakes and getting rejected.

Mixed Age Interactions

Mixed age education (*tatewari kyouiku*) is common practice in Japanese preschools. As we could see from the difference in the sizes of their bodies in the image below, Mika is smaller and younger than Satoshi (Figure 42). This is an example of the kind of mixed-age interactions I see as well in the Komatsudani video. Komatsudani has a *toban* (helper) system in which each day five of the five-year-old children go downstairs to help care for the babies and toddlers (Figure 43 and 44).

Figure 42. Mika and Satoshi

Figure 43. Pee Lesson

Figure 44. Helpers

There is a difference in that the mixed-age interaction at Komatsudani is structured while it spontaneous at Meisei. Komatsudani also has spontaneous mixed age-interactions before and after the formal school day (Figure 45). Both preschools emphasize the importance of mixed-age interactions.

Figure 45. Mixed Age Interactions

Teacher Non-Intervention/*Mimamoru*

On the playground Mika and Satoshi are arguing about the sides for the tug of war. Their teacher Ikeda-sensei is standing right next to them (Figure 46), but she does not intervene, and eventually even turns her away and looks the other way (Figure 47). Her gaze is off to the side and up in the air. I suggest that here I have visual evidence of a combination of two practices tied to beliefs: teacher non-intervention and *mimamoru*. When I asked Ikeda-sensei why she had not

intervened in Mika and Satoshi's argument, she replied by signing a phrase in JSL

that the interpreters translated as "*mimamoru.*" When I asked her what she meant

by *mimamoru*, she explained:

> I don't know how to say it other than *mimamoru*. Maybe, "Do it by
>
> yourself." I am just there. Children have their own social rules, so adults
>
> should not interrupt children's following their social rules.

I was surprised when Ikeda-sensei explained her strategy as *mimamoru*. Her

explanation of non-intervention and the value of watching and waiting were very

close to those offered by the hearing Japanese educators.

Figure 46. Ikeda watching

Figure 47. Ikeda turning away

I would like to point out here not only that in all three schools teachers watch and wait, but also the way they locate themselves vis a vis children. In Figure 48, Ikeda changes her location, moving to a place where she can sit to talk with Chika (in a pink shirt), and then turning around to watch Mika and Satoshi (Figure 49).

Figure 48. Ikeda changing her location to talk to Chika

Figure 49. Ikeda switching attention again

These postural movements are very similar to those of Morita-sensei at Komatsudani during the fight. From Figures 50 to 53, I see Morita-sensei walking by the girls who are fighting. In Figure 50, Morita is just on the top left edge of the frame, in a yellow shirt. She stays in the vicinity of the fighting girls, but not get so close as to lead them to stop fighting, the same use of location done by Ikeda-sensei during the fight at Meisei.

Figure 50. Morita on the top left edge

Figure 51. Morita passing by

Figure 52. Morita passing by

Figure 53. Morita passing by

Gyarari

Gyarari is the term that Kumagai-sensei, the director of the preschool in Kyoto, used to describe the children who observe other children's social interactions, as a Japanese cultural form of what Lave and Wenger (1991) call "legitimate peripheral participation." In Chapter 3, "*The Japanese Preschool's Pedagogy of Peripheral Participation*," I argue by using fights at Komatsudani and Madoka that Japanese educators have implicit cultural beliefs and practices about how children learn from observing other children involved in intense interactions. In each of the Japanese preschool videos, Komatsudani, Madoka, and Meisei, I can see *gyarari* children (peripheral participants).

At the Komatsudani, two girls are arguing over a teddy bear. In Figure 54, Maki, a pink dress, is watching behind two girls. In Figure 55, two other girls, wearing a blue dress and an orange dress, are watching what is going on among the other two girls who are arguing over the teddy bear.

Figure 54. Maki is watching

Figure 55. Reiko and Yoko are watching

In the Madoka video, two boys are arguing and a classroom teacher, Kaizuka-sensei, intervenes their fight. When Kaizuka-sensei keeps talking, several children around them are watching (Figure 56 and 57).

Figure 56. Children are watching

Figure 57. The gaze of the onlookers

The tug of war at the Meisei, I see *gyarari* children in the video. When Satoshi and Chika keep talking, one of their classmates, Norie, is just beside them watching their interactions (Figure 58).

Figure 58. Norie is watching

After finishing Satoshi and Chika's talk, Satoshi becomes a *gyarari* child when Mika and Chika talk (Figure 59).

Figure 59. Satoshi is now watching

Feelings

that makes me sad.

Figure 60. Chika's Sadness

Chika's crying and then saying (signing) that she is sad do not invite an immediate response from her teachers (Figure 60). First, another child comes over to comfort her. Eventually the teacher talks to her and encourages her to talk with Satoshi. Satoshi tells Mika that he has hurt Chika's feelings and needs to talk with her. By not intervening, the teacher allows for both the expression of emotion and for opportunities for children to respond to each other's emotions.

In Chapter 2, "*The Japanese Preschools Pedagogy of Feeling,*" I focus on moments where children and teachers express emotions in the videos of

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typical days at Komatsudani and Madoka. I discussed the high value and emphasis the hearing teachers placed on sadness. There is also a focus on the expression of emotion in the videos at the hearing schools. One example is Morita-sensei holds up blank origami paper and which she describes as "sad," to encourage children to draw on the paper (Figure 61).
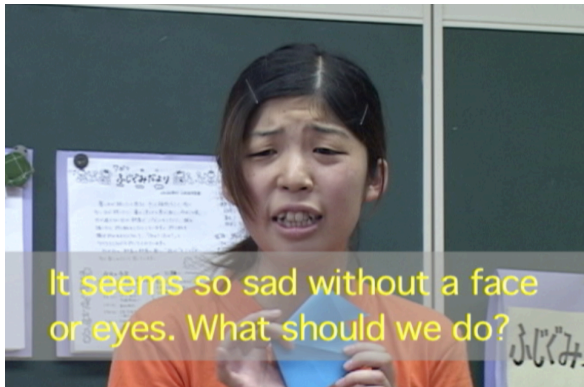
Figure 61. Origami sadness

Kaizuka-sensei shows the white paper to the children and says, "This card looks sad" (Figure 62).

Figure 62. Kaizuka saying the empty card looks sad

Childlike Children

When I asked Ikeda-sensei why she did not intervene in the argument between Mika and Satsoshi, she said:

If I interrupt at that point, I won't know how it will proceed. I don't have a

right to interrupt their conversation. And they didn't call me at that

moment.

This explanation is familiar to me. I heard very similar explanations from the

preschool teachers at Komatsudani and Madoka. The explanations for not

intervening offered by Ikeda-sensei and the hearing school teachers share three

key points: an attitude of giving children opportunity to solve their own problems;

the philosophy that children have their own way of viewing the world; and the

belief in the value of offering *minimum* help.

An appreciation for the "childishness" of children (*kodomo rashii*) is one

of the unmarked culturally implicit beliefs and practices of Japanese early

childhood education identified in the *Preschool in Three Cultures studies*. Tobin

et al.'s explanation of this is that "Japanese early childhood educators tend to give

a higher value to and to have a higher tolerance for the child-like, physically

expressed behaviors of children (p. 18)." Ikeda-sensei expressed an appreciation

for children's childlike ways of talking and acting by using the phrase "*kodomo

no sekai* ("children's world")." For example, in the process of getting feedback

from Ikeda-sensei on editing the video, I asked her if it was okay to include a

scene that shows Mika telling Chika, "I don't want to be friends with Erika

because she pulled my hair." I wondered if she would find Mika's comments too

harsh to include in this video, which would be shown to the children and their

parents, as well as Japanese educators. Ikeda-sensei said, "This is truly *kodomo no

sekai* (children's world), so it is totally fine to be in the video."

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I also asked her why mixed-age play is important and why do you and Meisei encourage mix aged play. She explained to me:

What children get from teacher-children interaction and children-children interaction are totally different. We think it's very important for children to be influenced by other children, and not just by teachers. I want them to play freely without thinking that they need to play with teachers. When teachers get involved in play, we cannot know how children play from their heart.

This explanation also speaks to the value Ikeda-sensei and other Japanese early childhood educators place on respecting and valuing children's worlds. Mixed-aged is encouraged because it provides room for children to experience a more rich and authentic children's world than they can experience in a classroom that is too teacher-directed or that only includes children of the same age. Ikeda-sensei wants children to engage in "real play," not artificial play. When I asked her, "What do children learn from mixed-aged play?" she replied: "Personal relationships." Here I see further evidence for her emphasis on social-emotional development rather than academic achievement. This is all consistent with what I have found in my interviews at Komatsudani and Madoka, and what the authors of both Preschool in Three Cultures studies found at hearing schools.

When I asked Ikeda-sensei which scene she was most eager to include in the final version of the video, which would be shown to deaf educators in other countries, she answered "Story telling." I asked, "Why? To show how you teach children now signed vocabulary?" She replied, "No," and then explained her

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pedagogical beliefs about the value of story telling:

> This is a picture book and a picture world is there. I try to pull it out so it's like a triangle: me as storyteller, children as audience, and the picture world. Through my signing, I try to bring children into a picture world. It should be a good balance. Children's reactions shouldn't too strong and I shouldn't be too strong.

This explanation is consistent with Japanese notions of a good teacher. A good teacher should not be absent or passive, but she should keep her mind empty, not have fixed ideas, and accept ideas from children.

Reflections on Deaf Pedagogical Beliefs and Practices

Alongside the Japanese cultural pedagogies, there are also deaf pedagogies at work at Meisei. An example of a deaf pedagogical belief, as explained to me by Ikeda-sensei, is the special role of deaf of deaf children in a deaf preschool. Ikeda-sensei explained that Mika is a child of deaf parents while Satoshi's parents are hearing. Approximately 10% of deaf children come from deaf families, where they learn to sign as their first language. Deaf children who come from hearing families can learn to sign from their teachers. But having the opportunity to interact with a peer who is fluent in sign is especially valuable for children from hearing families to get to learn how to sign in a child-like way. When I first showed Ikeda-sensei the tug of war argument she said:

> Satoshi signs very well. But because he comes from a hearing family and therefore learned to sign relatively recently, he lacks confidence in his signs, and that his signs will be understood. As a result he keeps repeating

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the same thing. Mika on the other hand comes from a deaf family, so even though she is younger, she has confidence in her signing and is used to being understood so she doesn't need to repeat herself. She knows that this is how Satoshi is so she is patient with him and lets him go on and on.

A second example of a deaf pedagogical practice in the Meisei video occurs during the argument, when Chika comes over and tries to talk with Mika, but Satoshi aggressively pushes her away. My first reaction on seeing this scene was that Satoshi's behavior was overly aggressive and unjustified. But Ikeda-sensei explained that in deaf culture, it is Chika and not Satoshi who is behaving rudely and inappropriately here. Satoshi seems aggressive and harsh, but his reaction is justified because in Deaf culture there are norms and rules for interrupting a conversation, rules that Chika breaks. In Deaf culture, since eye contact is the key to communication, the rules of turn taking are different than in the hearing world. When Chika tries to draw Mika's attention away from Satoshi before their discussion is over by saying (signing) "Look at me," she is acting very aggressively. I am not suggesting that deaf people never interrupt a conversation, but just that the norms for doing so are different than in the hearing world.

Teachers and administrators at Meisei also described to me a third deaf cultural belief and practice. Wakabayashi-san, the staff JSL/Japanese interpreter, said to me:

Deaf people need to be expressive. They don't read people's mind. They will ask, for example, they will ask you if you want to drink water. It's

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kind of strange among [Japanese] hearing people, don't you think? It is

called lack of *omoiyari,* if you do it, right?

Oka-sensei, one of the school's administrators, who is hearing and who had a

previous career working overseas as a diplomat said to me, "Like in American

culture, in deaf culture there is no culture of *sashi* (guessing/ reading people's

mind)." Both Wakabayashi-san and Oka-sensei frequently made this comparison

of deaf Japanese people and Americans, because they see a key characteristic of

both American and deaf cultures as directness, in contrast to the indirectness of

Japanese communication. *Sashi* is one of the key abilities needed to be a well-

socialized hearing person in Japan because *omoiyari* and *amae* depend on the

ability to read others' desire to receive help and to give help.

Why might deaf Japanese culture give less emphasis to *sashi* than does

hearing Japanese culture? One explanation would be that in deaf culture there is

less need to guess what people are thinking or feeling because, as Wakabayashi-

san suggested, deaf people are more expressive: "They express, talk, and explain

as much as they can." A second explanation could lie in the grammatical

structures of Japanese and JSL. Wakabayashi-san told me that JSL is similar with

English in terms of structure. She said: "JSL needs a subject." English requires

that a sentence have a subject, in contrast to Japanese, in which while subjects can

be used, more often the subject is implied or even ambiguous. Wakabayashi-san's

suggestion seems to be that the ambiguity and incompleteness of expression that

is valued in oral Japanese is in contrast with the greater clarity and directness

valued in speaking JSL. These explanations could help explain why I see many

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instances in the Meisei video of children expressing emotion very explicitly and even eloquently.

Another core principle of Japanese (and perhaps all other) Deaf pedagogy is a heightened awareness of being watchful and of being watched, a sensitivity that is required for a visual culture with a visual language. Ikeda-sensei's explanation of her use of *mimamoru* sounds much like what other Japanese preschool teachers told me about the value of watching and waiting. But when I asked a follow-up question about children's awareness that she is watching them, Ikeda-sensei connected *mimamoru* with deafness:

> Being Deaf is like this. It's not only in this situation, but all the time. To be Deaf is being able to be aware of everything in sight. So we are aware that something is going on over there even though it happens at the edge of our sight, and we are able to talk about it. Like suddenly a person over there says something to us, and we can talk about that thing.

Ikeda-sensei's explanation is close to comments of hearing teachers who say that they always listen to as well as observe what is going on in their classroom. But there are differences between the way deaf and hearing teachers observe and listen to their students and the way they let their students know that they are paying attention. A hearing teacher can cup her hand to her ear to indicate to a child that she is listening. And even when she is facing away from children, she can hear them and children may be aware of this fact and lower their voices to avoid the teacher's awareness of what they are saying. More research is needed to identify the strategies deaf teachers in Japan and elsewhere use to let children

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know when they are paying attention to them and the strategies deaf children use to avoid their teachers' surveillance. It must be the case that both hearing and deaf teachers use not just their gaze, but posture and facial expression to modulate their presentation of paying attention, but I need further research on just how they use their bodies to do this.

Ikeda-sensei's comments suggest that she sees a fundamental difference between deaf and hearing people in the function of sight. Another example is that when we worked with the Meisei staff on editing the Meisei video, Ikeda-sensei identified some shots she wanted deleted because by zooming in too closely the teachers or children's signing hands were cut out of the fame (which the hearing members of our team had not noticed). Wakabayashi-san later commented:

The way to make a movie is very different between deaf and hearing people. This is because deaf are "people of the eye (*me no hito*)." It is not easy for hearing people to understand that deaf cannot stand it if signing is cut off in the middle a phrase. But in addition to that, there are many other things that hearing people are not aware of in images but deaf people are aware of. That is, the world itself we are looking at is different. I feel that the big difference between deaf and hearing is that deaf are the people who are "living in culture of the eyes (*me no bunka ni ikiru hito*)."

Wakabayashi-san points out that the world looks different to deaf and hearing people. When the hearing members of our team (Tobin and I) were working on the video editing with Ikeda-sensei, we gradually came to realize that we had a different rhythm or tempo in mind for how we watch images. Ikeda-sensei, trying

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to explain why she found the way we had edited the video awkward, said to us: "*Kokyu* ("breath") is different between us." This comments raises a deep question about how humans experience the rhythm of life.

Kokyu is a word that means not only "breath" but also "relationships." For example, "*Kokyu ga au"* means, "The chemistry between us is right." *Aun no kokyu* means, "We understand each other well enough to work on something together without talking about it." If hearing and deaf people have different styles of *kokyu* this would imply that there must also be different notions of inter-personal relationships and even different subjectivity. Oka-sensei and Wakabayashi-san' comments that "Deaf people are like Americans" may mean not only that deaf Japanese are more direct than their hearing counterparts, but also that they have a different kind of subjectivity.

Differences in subjectivity can be related to differences in the grammars of JSL and Japanese, and to Wakabayashi's comment that JSL requires a subject for the sentence, in contrast to spoken Japanese. For example, when speaking Japanese people just say, "Sad," it can mean "We are sad," or "You are sad," or "I am sad" or "Things are sad." The reasoning here can go both ways in connecting language to subjectivity: the structure of the language we speak (or sign) can be thought of as a reflection of our subjectivity or the structure of our language can be seen as helping to produce our subjectivity. In JSL, in contrast, as in English, the verb "sad" is most often paired with a subject pronoun.

Evidence of Power of Cultural Practices and Beliefs

Anderson-Levitt (2002) suggests multiple cultures exist in a teaching

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culture. I have been focused in this chapter on the culturally shared patterns of Japanese teachers' practices and beliefs. Meisei Gakuen is a Deaf kindergarten in Japan. If I find similarities between Meisei and preschools for the deaf in the US and other countries, how can I explain the similarities? Is this a result of the global circulation of ideas in deaf education and culture? Another explanation would be that deaf schools in Japan and the US share similar practices is that the biological reality of deafness leads to common pedagogies and common cultural features based on sight. The similarities could result more from the embodiment of a signed language. Is there something about signing that makes the pedagogy of signing preschools similar? Meyer and Ramirez (2000) suggest that schooling systems around the world become increasingly similar due to global circulation. Anderson-Levitt (2004) argues that the local inhabits global models and the global inhabits local practice. Following this argument, I can expect the global circulation of ideas in deaf education and culture inhabit Japanese deaf teaching culture. Teachers at Meisei therefore can be expected to hold simultaneously the cultural practices and beliefs of both Japanese teaching culture and deaf teaching culture.

To what extent, if any, do the deaf Japanese teachers' explanations for their practices explicitly cite either Japanese or Deaf cultures and either Japanese or Deaf educational guidelines? When I asked her where her teaching method comes from, Ikeda-sensei gave me almost the same explanation as did Morita-sensei. She said:

We don't have rules here. It's just an atmosphere. It's possible to do it,

because I am here. If I would be in another school, then I would be

different.

This is very similar to Morita-sensei's response to the same question. She said:

Well we have some training but it's not in how to deal with children. If I

were in another nursery, it might be different. I think the atmosphere here

gives me my way of dealing with children right now.

Both of these teachers are saying that there are no explicit written guidelines. And

both say that the way they teach comes from their environment, including

observing other teachers. Their comments clearly suggest that the rationales for

their practices are more implicit than explicit.

I then would suggest that the Japaneseness of Meisei is further evidence of

the power of what I have been calling implicit cultural beliefs and practices.

Meisei is a deaf school, but a deaf school that is embedded in a larger culture of

teaching, and a larger national culture.

Chapter 7

CONCEPTUALIZING TEACHERS' IMPLICIT CULTURAL

PRACTICES AND BELIEFS

In this chapter I theorize the meaning of the key concept of this

dissertation: implicit cultural practices and beliefs of teachers. I do this by

comparing parallel conceptions from several disciplines: the anthropological

concept of culture; psychological anthropology's notion of self and; cognitive

psychology's notion of schema; Bruner's notion of folk pedagogy; and Kathryn

Anderson-Levitt's comparative educational concept of "professional knowledge

rooted in national classroom cultures." To these theories I add notions of

embodied practices. I also connect what I have been calling Japanese teachers'

implicit cultural practices to Japanese cultural notions of time, space, sight, and

body, notions that cut across and potentially can connect the topics addressed

separately in the previous chapters.

I first connect Japanese preschools teachers' pedagogy beliefs and

practices to those of Japanese culture. Next I look at how preschool teachers talk

about social-emotional development. I conclude with my attempt to define the

meaning of the concept of "implicit cultural practices and beliefs of teachers."

Becoming Japanese

How are Japanese educators' implicit cultural practices and beliefs about

the pedagogy of social-emotional development connected to more general aspects

of Japanese culture? A basic concern of psychological anthropology is how

children become members of their culture. One key place where they learn this is

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in preschools. Japanese preschool teachers therefore play an important role in contemporary Japan as agents of enculturation, people who both reflect and help form the culture to which they belong.

My study is focused on the question of how Japanese preschool teachers think and talk about the pedagogy of social-emotional development. How Japanese teachers think and talk about the pedagogy of social-emotional development is closely connected to their ideas about what children need to learn to become an appropriate member of their society, which is to say to become Japanese. In the previous chapters I focused on specific aspects of preschool teachers beliefs and practices, one aspect at a time. Here, I expand my focus to enculturation, to Japanese beliefs about how preschool teachers help children become members of Japanese society. I also attempt to connect Japanese preschool teachers' beliefs about how best to support children's social-emotional development with what other scholars have suggested are key aspects of Japanese culture and the Japanese self.

Learning to Live Among Others

A key component of Japanese teachers' cultural beliefs and practices about the pedagogy of social-emotional development is teaching children how to share time and space with others. This statement may at first sound circular, as social-emotional development means children developing social and emotional skills, which in turn means learning to live among others. But what I want to emphasize here is that this process requires the development not only of children as individuals, but also of children in a preschool class as a community. I can put

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it even more strongly: for a class of four-year-olds to come to function as a community should be conceptualized not only or primarily as a development accomplishment of individuals, but also as the development of a collective. Being Japanese is not something one can learn or do by oneself. In Japanese preschools it is a class of children, rather than twenty-five individual children, who learn to function as a community and therefore who learn to be Japanese.

Harmony Between You and Me

Kimura Bin (1972) says that personhood in Japan takes place not inside individuals but rather in a space he calls *hito to hito no aida* – between or among people. Doi Takeo uses the term *amae,* which he defines as the desire to depend on another person in order to identify with others, which he sees as a prerequisite to building personal relationships in Japan. To say that the Japanese self is embedded in relationships does not mean that the individual Japanese person does not have a self, but rather that the self is experienced and expressed in relationships such as *amae* and *omoiyari* which are played out in interpersonal interactions over a variety of times and space. The Japanese self is not so much in dialogue with others, as is suggested by many Western theorists (as in Heidigger's notion of intersubjectivity or Bakhtin's of dialogism and answerability) but rather *in harmony* with others.

Preschool teachers often talk about children's social-emotional development in context, by which I mean they focus on the development of the class as a community and on the importance of class harmony, which Kimura defines as "something shared between or among people in space and time."

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In the Madoka video there is a scene when the children are left alone in the classroom teacher while their teacher is changing out of her swimming suit. When we showed this scene to Madoka's director, Machiyama-sensei, anticipating the criticism this scene might produce, explained:

> I know it looks bad, right? But she could leave the classroom because she had that group of children for two years. She knew that the children would be okay without her while she changed her clothes.

I read this comment of Machiyama-sensei as suggesting that the classroom teacher has an understanding of her class as a community that gives her confidence that they will be fine during her absence. Because she has come to know the children in her classroom over two years, she knows how the classroom community works.

Morita-sensei of Komatsudani Hoikuen used a similar logic to explain how she knew she could hold back from intervening in the fight in her classroom among a group of girls over a teddy bear. Her explanation emphasizes her knowledge of the children in her class both in terms of their individual personalities and the way they function collectively:

> Nao might have been having a tough day, but she is strong. She tried to get the teddy bear back even though she was crying. . . . I know that Yoko can be aggressive in that kind of situations because of her home environment. She sometimes behaves like an adult. The twins, Seiko and Reiko, always show a tight connection. But I could let them fight with Nao because I knew Maki was around.

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Morita-sensei's thinking here is focused on the capacity of a group of children to handle a situation. Her focus is on this group of girls as a collective. This does not mean that she is not aware of their individual personalities. She mentions individual characteristics of each child. However the individual differences are not her primary concern. As long as these children with very different personalities are interacting with each other, Morita-sensei is satisfied that there is an opportunity for their social-emotional development.

This fight scene in the Komatsudani video raised the question among American preschool teachers of whether Nao was being bullied by the other girls. However none of the Japanese teachers I interviewed viewed this as a scene of bullying. My speculation is that Japanese teachers tend to see in this scene not separation among children but instead the interaction, the "between" and the "among" of the children.

I am not suggesting that Japanese teachers deny individual differences or think of the group of children in their class as homogenous. In fact, teachers often say, "Each child is different," or "If we have 31 children, then, we need 31 approaches." Ikeda-sensei of Meisei Gakuen explained to me the reason she thinks mixed-age play is important: "It is important because children can come to know differences. Some children are very slow, some children are weak. It is easier for children to know differences if they interact with children of different ages." The logic here is that in order to learn to function as a community, children need to learn to know and accept individual difference. The key to being a community is not being the same but rather learning how to create harmony with

others. Developing this sense of harmony is a part of yourself, and at the core of learning to be a person in Japan, according to Kimura's notion of *hito to hito tono aida* (1972), and Hamaguchi's notion of *kanjin shugi* (1988). Another way to put it is preschool teachers focus on developing *hito to hito tono aida* or *kanjin*, or what I am calling "harmony."

The syntax of spoken Japanese supports this development of a social sense of self, as the Japanese language does not require that sentences have subjects and objects. Suzuki (1973), a Japanese linguist, suggests that using "I" and "you" in conversation implies disconnection or severance of relationships. People aim to create something in between them, something shared, something that does not belong to either one alone and can belong to both of them at once. Using subjects and objects creates an undesired distinction between "you" and "me," and works against the sense of the relationality that is at the core of being a good person in Japan.

In the Komatsudani video there is a scene where Morita-sensei tells the children in her class that everyone has a different face. Her explanation is: "I talked about the difference of faces not because I think 'individuality' is important but because I wanted to remove children's fear and anxiety about individual difference." Her explanation is complicated. The concepts of *amae* and *omoiyari* can help explain what Morita-sensei meant here by difference and individuality. In order for *amae* (expressions of dependency) and *omoiyari* (empathy) to function, people need to have a feeling of similarity or connection. It could be argued that *omoiyari* requires an acknowledgement, an understanding that the

other person has needs different from your own. I see Morita-sensei as suggesting that for *amae* and *omoiyari* to function people first have to acknowledge the difference among people and then believe that there is a possibility of people overcoming individual differences and separation and loneliness through social interactions.

Kumagai-sensei, the preschool director in Kyoto, watched the fight scene at the Madoka and commented: "The teacher should not be the judge. White or black doesn't matter at all. Rather, it is the gray zone that is important." This statement can be interpreted in several ways. She might mean that it is not useful to determine who was at fault in a fight. Or she might be saying that it is not possible to determine who is at fault. I prefer interpret her statement as an appreciation of the value of harmony, because gray is the harmony of white and black. To become Japanese, these harmonies are important. Children need to learn to adjust their behavior according to time and space and to create "something" between themselves and others and in this betweenness experience and express a sense of self in harmony with others.

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Implicit Cultural Practices and Beliefs

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My study is not about what teachers do, but rather about how teachers think and talk about what they are doing. Tobin et al (2009) define implicit cultural practices as "practices that though not taught explicitly in schools of education or written down in textbooks reflect an implicit cultural logic" (p.19). Cultural anthropology makes the distinction between emic and etic categories. My approach in this dissertation has been emic, descriptions and analyses from the

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point of view of people within a culture. I have focused on identifying emic terms related to the pedagogy of social-emotional development. As de Certeau writes in his book (1984), *The Practice of Everyday Life*: "Of all the things everyone does, how much gets written down?" De Certeau's notion of the practices of everyday life are very close to what I am calling implicit cultural practices, little things people do everyday without being conscious of doing them and usually without drawing the attention of others. Following de Certeau, I can define implicit cultural practices as cultural practices that are left unwritten.

Bakhtin makes a distinction between "authoritative discourse" and "internally persuasive discourse." Authoritative discourse is "It is indissolubly fused with its authority—with political power, an institution, a person—and it stands and falls together with that authority (Bakhtin, 1982, p. 343)" and therefore demands "unchanged." On the other hand, Bakhtin writes (1982) "The semantic stricture of an internally persuasive discourse is not finite, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever new ways to mean (p. 346)." It is such internally persuasive discourses that I have looked for in this study. The things I have described are not things that demand unconditional allegiance, and are not fixed and yet are widely shared by people in a culture.

Psychological anthropologists and cognitive anthropologists including most prominently D'Andrade and Strauss (1992) have used the concepts of "cultural schema," "cultural models," and "cultural maps" to attempt to explain the process by which culture influences action. While finding these concepts helpful, I agree with Charles Franke's point: "Culture does not provide a

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cognitive map, but rather a set of principles for map-making and navigation (1977, p. 45)." This perspective suggests that the role of culture is not fixed; in Bakhtin's terms, "internally persuasive discourse is not finite." These schema are continuously being reworked, these maps continuously redrawn.

The work of the comparative educator and educational anthropologist Kathryn Anderson-Levitt has led me to look closely at what she calls "teaching cultures," that is, knowledge, values, and know-how that concern very specifically what and how to teach (2002, p. 33). Anderson-Levitt (2002) describes teaching cultures as "What do teachers know even when they don't know they know it (p. 2)." These are implicit rather than explicit forms of knowledge and action, tacit rather than written down.

Japanese Educators' Implicit Cultural Practices and Beliefs

In this dissertation, I have explored the pedagogy of social-emotional development of Japanese teachers by dividing these pedagogical beliefs into separate domains and concepts including feelings, fighting, peripheral participation; *mimamoru*, and *machi no hoiku*. A cost of discussing these issues in separate chapters is to risk missing the deeper implicit cultural beliefs that connect these separate domains and concepts. I suggest that at a deeper level these emic concepts reflect implicit cultural notions of time, space, sight, and body.

Time

I am not talking about time here in the historical sense, as a continuum from past to present or from present to future. Instead, my focus on time is on Japanese educators' sense and experience of the duration and flow of time, both in

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their classrooms and in their professional development. In these chapters I have found evidence of a cultural notion of time. A key piece of this cultural notion is what I call Japanese educators' "long perspective" and their lack of being in a rush, a perspective that allows teachers to accept what they see as children's age-appropriate, child-like behavior and administrators to accept what they see as the inevitable stumbles of inexperienced teachers.

This cultural notion of time underlies the logic of *mimamoru* and *machi no hoiku*, a logic expressed in the statement, "It takes at least three years to learn to teach well." A long perspective allows and shapes the way Japanese teachers teach in their classroom and develop their teaching skills and knowledge. "It takes time" is one of the phrases that I most often heard from the teachers in the interviews. For example, teachers said, "It takes time to be able to create a gallery" (which I have translated as meaningful peripheral participation) and "It takes time to master *mimamoru*" (watching and waiting).

A long perspective underlies Japanese teachers' notion of child development and their role in scaffolding this development. Japanese teachers often explain their patience in dealing with children's disputes and emotional outbursts by saying, "I have three years with these children." Teachers often explained the thinking about an incident by pointing out when this incident occurred in the school year or at what age in a child's life or period since enrolling in school, in phrases such as "That fight happened in April," (the beginning of the school year), or "She was then the youngest child in the class," or "She was new to the school at that time." These comments suggest that

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teachers' approach how to deal with children not with a fixed set of practices but with a logic that depends on how they locate behaviors in a long flow of time.

This is connected to the emic term, *kodomo-rashii kodomo* ("childlike children"). As I mentioned in Chapter 6, the appreciation for the childishness of children is a core implicit Japanese cultural belief. A baby can be a baby only when he is a baby and a four-year-old can be four years old only when she is four, so why rush things? When I asked Nogami-sensei at Komatsudani about children who are very dependent he replied: "I worry about children who are not dependent (*amae-ru)* at this age." This is consistent with the comments of a teacher in Tokyo about children's fighting: "Children should fight at this age; otherwise, when can they fight? It's too late if they wait to start fighting when they get older. Then, it's dangerous."

This long perspective underlies such practices of teachers as letting children fight, letting them express dependence, and letting them express emotions in immature, childlike ways. These practices are also supported by some structural features of the Japanese preschool, such as large class size and teachers staying with a group of children for three years. We can say both that these structural features determine teaching strategies and that the structures reflect teaching strategies. The point I want to emphasize here is that Japanese preschool teachers' cultural notions of time, and especially their long time perspective, plays a central role in their teaching practices.

Sight

The notion of the gaze in Western discourse is often linked to surveillance and voyeurism, as we find in Foucault's writings on panopticism. In Western early childhood education discourse, the gaze is most often focused on catching problems before they arise and on monitoring the individual development of each child in a class rather than on the class as a community. In Japan, on the other hand, the teacher's gaze is something to modulate, with as much emphasis on the value of looking away as looking and on looking carefully (observing) as a strategy to aid not intervening rather than intervention, as I describe the practice of *mimaroru* (watching and waiting) in Chapter 4.

Japanese educators have implicit cultural beliefs and practices about the value of children learning from observing other children involved in intense interactions. This suggests a difference between the Japanese notion of being watched and Western notions of peripheral participation and observational learning. In earlier chapters I have discussed the notions of the *gyarari*, *mawari no ko* ("the children around or surrounding") and *seken no me* (the eyes of society or what Takie Lebra translates as "the generalized audience," 1992). These emic terms show that Japanese teachers think that watching is one of kind of legitimate participation in a community. The important point here is that watching is not necessarily associated with surveillance in Japan. I am not saying that watching is never surveillance, but especially in educational settings, watching is mostly positive.

Japanese teachers' beliefs and practices about sight connect with their cultural notion of time. For example, teachers can be patient while watching children fighting because they conceive of their watching as a form of guarding and protecting, rather than as doing nothing active. Teachers can watch without intervening because they have a long time perspective.

Space

Cultural notions of space are closely tied to cultural notions of sight. How to use space or create space in the classroom is related with the teachers' art of how to look like they either are or are not paying attention to what children are doing: teachers perform attention and inattention. They artfully manipulate their space to appear more and less present and attentive to the children in the classroom in order to encourage children to handle their own disputes (and not only disputes, but also emotional support or emotional participation) while at the same time providing the children with a scaffolding and a safety net. Instead of saying "I can handle up to 15 children," Japanese teachers often say, "I can handle a space this big," or "I can watch a space about this big." At Komatudani Hoikuen, the four- and five-year-olds classrooms are next to each other. There is a removable wall between them. Director Yoshizawa told me: "If one of the classroom teachers needs to leave the classroom, they can open up the wall so the other teacher can watch the children for awhile."

During the fight scene at Madoka, Kaizuka-sensei intervened when one of the boys came over and explained to her that another had pulled his hair. The intervention took more than 15 minutes. Twice during this period of talking with

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the two boys, she shifted their location in the classroom. After the second move,

she said to them: "Think about it. When you boys are ready to tell me the truth,

please let me know," and she then left them. She explained to me that she left

them alone to think about their argument. By leaving them for a few minutes, she

performed inattention to let them know that the next step was up to them. By

telling them to let her know when they were ready to tell the truth, she implied to

them that her attention would then be available.

The other aspect of space Kaizuka-sensei manipulated in this event is

creating opportunities for other children's peripheral participation. I asked

Kaizuka-sensei, "Do you consider telling the children not involved in the dispute

to move away while you talked to the two boys?" She replied: "Not really. I

wanted the two boys to know that other children care about you and worry about

you. I occasionally do ask children to move away, but that's only when I need to

talk with a particular child about his own problem." Kaizuka's comments about

space here connect with the Japanese teachers' notions of sight which, as

discussed above, is modulating rather than surveillance.

Another way Japanese preschool teachers use space is connected with self-

other relations. The Japanese early childhood educators I interviewed often

mentioned the importance of *ma* (間), which is most often translated into English

as "interval" or "pause." *Ma* carries a sense not only of time, but also of space.

The character for *ma* has a second reading—*aida*, which is used to refer to both

the physical space and the psychological distance that separates people.

I propose that this emic term *ma* is a key aspect of becoming a person in Japan. "Person" in Japanese is *ningen* (人間,) a two-character ideograph that includes *ma/aida* (間). This suggest that in Japanese the notion of a person is inherently social—a person among other people. A person can be a person only in the context of relationships with others. The psychoanalyst Bin Kimura in 1972 introduced the concept of *hito to hito no aida* ("between one person and another"). Hamaguchi Esyun (1988) presented a similar notion of being a person. His phrase is "*kanjin shugi* (contextualism), that is, the idea of defining the existence of a person in the context of others. *Jibun* (自分), the Japanese word for "self," is also inherently relational, as it carries a meaning of "on my side." To become a person in Japan, children need to learn *ma*, to know how to adjust and locate oneself vis-avis other people.

In Japanese preschool life, children have ample opportunities to develop this Japanese sense of self. *Kejime* plays a key part in this process. In Chapter 6, I described *kejime* as a common Japanese expression which refers to the process of the person identifying differences between contexts and acting differently/appropriately according to the demands/expectations of the context. *Kejime* carries a deeper meaning of needing to have or produce a different version of self depending on who you are with and what kind of occasion you are in and the time and space you are occupying. Teachers often provide difference kinds of space to support children to learn *kejime* such as changing shoes between inside and outside, or even the physical space is the same, mean in the same classroom,

teachers create the different kind of space by using polite words to say certain greetings.

Using space as a tool of performing attention and inattention, creating shared space among children, and viewing space as mark for different behavior, these notions strongly support or reflect Japanese teachers' teaching practices.

The Body

Notions of the body are tied to cultural notions of time, sight, and space, just as each of these notions interact with the other: time and sight, sight and space, and space and time. In his essay *Techniques of the Body* Marcel Mauss wrote (1973) : "The body is man's first and most natural instrument." I propose that to be a good teacher you must master cultural practices not only on how to locate your body in space but also how to use effectively eye contact, touch, and posture. Of all the cultural practices I have discussed in this dissertation, it is those most tightly tied to the body that are the most implicit, least conscious, and least often described in guidelines and textbooks. According to Bourdieu (1977), embodiment practices do not require discourse or consciousness to pass from practice to practice.

Much can be conveyed by the attitude of the body, such as the teacher's tone of voice, gestures, postures, positioning in the classroom, use of eye contact, use of touch, ways of sitting, and facial expressions. Following Mauss (1973), we can say that the body is the key (though also the most overlooked) instrument of teaching. It is with their bodies that teachers put their cultural beliefs into practice. The body has its own voice and intentionality. Teachers' embodied practices may

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either be consistent or inconsistent with their explicit beliefs and conscious intents.

I presented an example of a consistency of teachers' words and inconsistency of bodily practice in Chapter 6. Ikeda-sensei explained to me (using Japanese sign language) how she deals with children's disputes by employing *mimamoru*. Her words suggest a sharing of an emic cultural practice with hearing Japanese preschool teachers. But when we take time to study her practices, as recorded in our video of a day in her classroom, we can see her use her body differently than the teachers do in the hearing preschools. We can say that her version of *mimamoru* combines a Japanese teacher's practice with a deaf cultural practice, expressed through her body.

Conscious or Unconscious

Do Japanese preschool teachers have conscious explanations for the questions I asked them in this study, questions such as: "How long do you wait before intervening in children's fights?" "How do you decide where to stand in the classroom?" and "What kind of facial expressions do you use to indicate approval or disapproval?" I can ask such questions and in most cases teachers can come up with answers. But we can't be sure that their post hoc explanations they provide for their actions are the same as the thoughts they have at the moment they act. Their explanations give insight into a cultural way of talking and thinking about practice, but this is not the same thing as concluding that these explanations directly produced the practice. In part this comes down to a question of how conscious teachers are of the thinking that guides their actions.

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In my analysis of the fight scene in the Komatsudani video, and of my interviews with Morita-sensei and other Japanese educators about this scene, I have suggested that we can find evidence of implicit cultural notions of time, sight, space and the body. But does this mean that Morita-sensei thinks about all these things in order to decide how to act when there is a fight? Does it mean that her non-intervention is a conscious choice? My answer to these questions is "Yes and No." To say that the choice is not conscious risks implying that it is not based on thought and knowledge, and to diminish Morita-sensei's skill as a teacher. But to say the choice is totally conscious is to risk confusing post-hoc with contemporaneous explanation. I suggest that instead of asking if these explanations are conscious or unconscious, we should focus on how they are embodied practices that belong to both the body and the mind as well as being infused in the structural features of the Japanese preschool. And they are located not just or primarily in the minds of individual teachers, but in teachers as a members of a collective culture of fellow professional practitioners, who they both learn these practices from and pass these practices on to others through apprenticeship learning that rarely requires explicit explanations or rationales.

Teachers'/Educators' Implicit Cultural Practices and Beliefs

What I have been describing in previous chapters and in this chapter can be called a cultural *art of teaching*, by which I mean that teachers' implicit cultural practices and beliefs are harmonized in teachers' mind and body, making connections between them, and used depending on the nuances of a situation, as informed by teachers' conscious and unconscious thoughts.

Another way to put it is I am arguing that what I call "teachers' implicit cultural beliefs and practices" exists in the space between mind and body and between individuals and collectives. These beliefs and practices exist in the harmony of body and mind, a harmony that creates what Ikeda-sensei referred to as the "breath" of teachers. I believe that what she called "breath" is very close to what I am calling "implicit cultural beliefs and practices." It is something hearing teachers sometimes describe using musical metaphors such as "rhythm" and that teachers in the US sometimes refer to as "with-it-ness." An example would be ways of swimming. Once people learn to swim, they can do it, but (unless they are a coach) not easily describe how they position their body and move their legs and arms. Your mind knows how to swim at the same time your body remembers how to do it. You do not think each moment you are in the pool of what to do and how to do, but it does not mean that you are swimming unconsciously. When you reach a level of mastery such that your mind and body harmonize, you need no longer put much energy or conscious thought into the action. I view teachers' implicit cultural beliefs and practices what I call "the art of teaching." And I am suggesting that this art of teaching is practiced differently in different cultures.

Another way of conceptualizing such a culturally specific, embodied practice linking body and mind is Bourdieu's concept of "Habitus." Habitus is produced by "the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristics of a class condition)" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72) and that are often taken for granted. For Bourdieu a habitus is reflective not only of a culture but also of a class. I can extend his logic

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by saying habitus is also characteristic of an occupational group, such as preschool teachers, working within a particular culture, such as Japan.

It is not surprising that I could find evidence of a similar practice and logic vertically distributed within Japanese early childhood education, from the way teachers act with children, to the way directors act with teachers, to the way government ministries act with directors, to the way deaf and hearing educators act with their deaf and hearing students. Because these practices are forms of bodily habitus, it makes sense that they would be across fields of action and settings among people who belong to the same larger culture. Because the deaf and hearing teachers, the directors, the experts, and the government bureaucratics I have interviewed for this study are all Japanese, a considerable overlap of beliefs and practices is to be expected. Because they are of different occupations and occupy different fields of Japanese society, some differences are equally to be expected. People are simultaneously members of local, occupational, and national cultures. I have tried to show in this dissertation how Japanese preschool teachers are members of a distinctive national professional culture.

Future Direction

I have given my next project the working title of "Embodied Cultural Practices." I started this dissertation with the question of how Japanese preschool teachers think and talk about the pedagogy of social-emotional development. My method adapted and extended the video-cued multivocal ethnographic method developed by Tobin and his colleagues. This study was an interview-based, ethnographic study of teachers' beliefs and practices about the pedagogy of

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social-emotional development. I have focused in this dissertation on the emic terms that Japanese preschool teachers used to explain practices captured in the Preschool in Three Cultures videos.

In this conclusion chapter I have been attempting to take these emic concepts to a deeper level by connecting the emic pedagogical concepts I identified in the earlier chapters with more general Japanese cultural notions of time, space, sight, and body. I also tried to theorize some deeper principles that underlie the implicit cultural practices and beliefs of Japanese teachers. My answer to the question of how to conceptualize teachers' implicit cultural practices and beliefs is to call these, as I wrote above: "A cultural *art* of teaching, by which I mean that teachers' implicit cultural practices and beliefs are harmonized in teachers' mind and body, making connections between them, and used depending on the nuances of a situation, as informed by teachers' conscious and unconscious thoughts (p. 175)." I have come to realize through the process of conceptualizing teachers' emic pedagogical concepts that it is with their *bodies* that teachers put their cultural beliefs into practice. Because my focus has been on teachers' beliefs and practices, I have not paid much attention to their bodies. In the next stage of my research I will center my analysis on embodied practices of teachers, by asking such questions as: How do Japanese teachers perform *mimamoru* with their body? What do they do, with words or especially with their bodies, to support the effective operation of a gallery of children that looks on during a dispute?

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How can I move from this dissertation's focus on teachers' beliefs and talk to studying their embodied practices? I will focus on the teacher's body as their instrument of teaching by following Marcel Mauss's notion of the techniques of the body. Methodologically, I will move away from the method of video-cued multi vocal ethnography that uses the video not as data but as interviewing cues. I have adapted and extended the video-cued multi vocal ethnography method in this study, but I haven't moved beyond the use of the videos as a cue to provoke discussion. In this dissertation I have used the videos/images as data to support my argument or/and illustrate the practices that Japanese teachers described to me. However I have not quite used the images as data, by which I mean I did not analyze the images themselves. In my next project, I am going to use the videos/images as data, in micro-analyses of how teachers enact with their bodies at the pedagogy of social-emotional development.

One example of an approach would be to re-focus attention on scenes in the videos by putting still images in a time sequence and circling the part of the image which shows teacher's embodied practice. For example, in this series of images from the video shot at Meisei Gakuen. Ikeda-sensei, in a red circle, is doing *mimamoru* when two children, Satoshi with a blue shirt and Chika with a pink shirt, are arguing. My focus in this new project would be on how Ikeda-sensei performs *mimamoru,* by using her face and posture to show her attention and inattention to children. In Figure 63, she is watching the children directly. In Figures 64 and 65 she looks away from the children for a while. In Figure 66, her eyes come back watching the children.

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Figure 63. Ikeda watching

Figure 64. Ikeda looking around

Figure 65. Ikeda turning around

Figure 66. Ikeda watching again

I would like to analyze the images by employing micro-analysis. I am thinking I could use the footage from the videos and manipulate the images in the video, using Final Cut Pro editing tools to recenter and refocus the images and our attention, and in this way to explore implicit cultural embodied practices related with supporting children's social-emotional development.

One limitation of this study is a lack of emphasis on describing variations within the culture, since I emphasized culturally shared patterns of teachers. In the new project, I will focus more on variations, such as comparing experienced teachers and new teachers. One of my findings in this study is that to a significant degree Japanese preschool educators do share beliefs and practices in how they talk and think about the pedagogy of social-emotional development. My interviewees included both new and experienced teachers, but I did not find many differences in their perspectives, other than the fact that the experienced teachers tended to be better able to verbalize the logic behind their practices better than were new teachers. The more experienced teachers often said things like, "I couldn't do *mimamoru* when I was young." These sorts of comments suggest there are differences in practice if not in beliefs between beginning and

experienced teachers. This raised the question: What is it that takes three or more years for teachers to learn to do well?

In my future work I plan to approach this question of accomplished teaching by doing close visual analysis of the embodiment of teaching practices. As Thomas Csordas suggests (1988): "Psychological anthropology has tended to operate within the mind-body duality, conceptualized as the relation between the subjective mental domain of psychocultural reality and the objective physical domain of biology (p. 36)." I would like to build upon the notion of mind-body harmony I have referred to in this dissertation and to focus in my next study on the embodiment of practices of Japanese teachers for supporting children's social-emotional development.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a cost of discussing pedagogical issues one by one in separate chapters, as I have done in this dissertation, is to risk missing the deeper implicit cultural beliefs that connect separate domains and concepts. To better explicate the deeper beliefs that cut across domains of teaching, in my future work I will focus on teachers' pedagogical practices that are used throughout domains and throughout the school day. I will conduct interviews in which I ask teachers to reflect on the deeper pedagogical beliefs that underlie a range of practices and situations. For example, in chapter 3, I described the Japanese teachers' pedagogy of peripheral participation in dealing with children's fights. Do teachers encourage such peripheral participation during other domains as well, domains other than fights, such as during art activities or in the learning of cognitive concepts?

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Another direction I would like to take is comparative work. I am not claiming that what I have described in this dissertation is unique in Japan. What I have described here I would argue is characteristic of Japanese pedagogy, but that is not to say it is unique to Japan. I would like to conduct comparative studies to see if these pedagogies I found in this dissertation can be found in other cultures.

My longer perspective on my future research is to situate my work in the three fields: education (early childhood education and comparative education), psychology (child development and cultural psychology), and anthropology (psychological anthropology, educational anthropology, and anthropology of Japan). What Japanese children learn in Japanese preschool is what cultural psychologists call a cultural sense of self; what psychological anthropologists used to call a cultural personality and now more often call a cultural self; and what cultural anthropologists describe as Japanese (thinking and acting in a characteristically Japanese way). This dissertation has stimulated me to keep thinking how my work contributes to these three fields, education, psychology, and anthropology and challenges me to think about how my future work can more completely integrate these disciplinary perspectives.

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APPENDIX A

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTINAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To: Joseph Tobin

From: Mark Roosa, Chair
                    Soc Beh IRB

Date: 06/16/2009

Committee Action: **Exemption Granted**

IRB Action Date: 06/16/2009

IRB Protocol #: 0905004037

Study Title: Japanese Preschool Educators' Cultural Practices and Beliefs about

                    Social Emotional Development

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

APPENDIX B

METHOD SECTION FROM "THE JAPANESE PRESCHOOL'S PEDAGOGY

OF FEELING: CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING YOUNG

CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT"

Method

In most ethnographic studies of emotion, the informants are the people feeling the emotion. In contrast, in our study the emphasis is on adult reflections on their interactions with children who are experiencing emotions. In other words, the material we analyze here is not people's reflections on their own emotional experiences, but adult explanations of the way they organize, respond to, and think about the emotional experiences of the children in their charge (see Ellsworth 1995; Briggs, 1999).

The ethnographic vignettes and interviews we present in this paper come from a larger, just completed study, "Continuity and Change in Preschool in Three Cultures," a follow up to the original study conducted in the mid-1980s and published by Joseph Tobin, David Wu, and Dana Davidson in 1989 as *Preschool in Three Cultures: Japan, China, and the United States*. The new study, led by Joseph Tobin, Yeh Hsueh, and Mayumi Karasawa, and supported by the work of a team of research assistants including Akiko Hayashi, adds a historical dimension to the original study's cross-cultural focus. The new study features return visits to the preschools studied a generation earlier. In this paper we analyze instances of emotional socialization captured on a videotape made in the new study in Komatsudani Hoikuen (Daycare Center) in Kyoto.

In the "Preschool in Three Cultures" method the videos function primarily neither as data nor as description but instead as rich non-verbal cues designed to stimulate critical reflection (Spindler 1987, 1992; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson 1989; Tobin & Hsueh 2007). In this method, we make no a priori claim about the

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typicality of the events captured in the videos. Instead, typicality is addressed by showing a videotape made in a single preschool to teachers and directors at other preschools in various sites in each country and asking them to comment on the typicality or atypicality of the events in the video (see Tobin, 1992, "A Dialogic Solutions to the Problem of Fieldsite Typicality"). The videotape is used to provoke reflection not just from the teachers videotaped, but also from their colleagues, their supervisors, and from their counterparts in other cities and other countries. The steps of the method are straightforward. We (1) videotape a day in a preschool; (2) edit the tape down to 20 minutes; (3) show the edited tape to the classroom teacher, and ask her to comment and offer explanations; (4) hold focus-group discussions of the tape with other staff at the preschool; (5) hold focus-group discussions with staff of other preschools around the country (to address the question of typicality); and (6) hold focus group discussions with staff of preschools in the two other countries in the study.

In the Preschool in Three Cultures method, the emphasis is on insiders' explanations; that is, on the teachers' reflections on their practice. Although in this paper we make use of teacher reflections on the practices and behaviors seen in the videotapes, our approach differs a bit from the original and forthcoming books in giving greater emphasis to explanations that come from us, the researchers, rather than from the teachers. These explanations, while, we would suggest, consistent with the teachers' reflections, are at a more meta-level of analysis; these are interpretations and explanations of teaching approaches that reflect a cultural logic that is not taught in teacher training programs or found in

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education textbooks or, in most cases, consciously available to practitioners anymore than is the deep grammatical structure of the language they speak. We suggest that in most cases when Japanese teachers talk about sad fish and lonely carrots they do so not because they were taught to do so in their early childhood education courses or because they consciously intend to scaffold children's emotional development, but because it seems like the right thing to do. These actions are therefore more usefully thought of as cultural scripts or as forms of culturally embedded logic than as (conscious) pedagogical strategies. We are not suggesting that these actions are incidental, or unintended, nor that they are hidden, in the sense sometimes implied by the term "hidden curriculum," which is often (but not always) is used to describe the way schools work as sites to reproduce and transmit social inequality (Jackson, 1968; Apple 1979). Rather, by calling these practices "implicit," we are emphasizing that they are cultural beliefs and practices that are widely shared by practitioners and passed down from generation to generation of teachers, without needing to be codified, written down, or explicitly taught.

The method we used to bring these implicit beliefs and practices to the level of explicitness is to analyze the reflections of Japanese teachers and directors reflecting on some scenes in our video in a Japanese preschool preschool, scenes that feature teachers talking with children about emotions and strategically intervening and not intervening in children's disputes. The three of us researchers, who are the members of the larger Preschool in Three Cultures research team who have a professional interest in studying Japanese culture and who speak Japanese

(and English), then engaged in a collaborative process of watching and discussing the Komatsudani Hoikuen videotape as well as the interviews we conducted about the videotape with teachers and directors at Komatsudani and other Japanese preschools. The goal of our discussions of the data was to use our insider and outside knowledge of Japanese culture and Japanese preschools to construct a Japanese ethnopsychological and ethnopedagogical understanding of the teaching of emotions in Japanese preschool. Much of our discussion focused on identifying characteristic words and phrases Japanese practitioners use to talk about feelings and to reflect on the linguistic range of the use of these terms as both everyday and technical expressions and concepts.

APPENDIX C

METHOD SECTION FROM "THE JAPANESE PRESCHOOL'S PEDAGOGY

OF PERIPHERAL PARTICIPATION"

Method

The method we employ for our re-analysis is a modification of the video-cued ethnographic interviewing approach used in the old and new Preschool in Three Cultures studies. In this method the videos are not the data. Rather, each scene in the video functions, like a verbal question in an ethnographic interview, to provoke reflection and explanation from cultural insiders. For this article we deployed this method in three ways. We reanalyzed the transcripts from the interviews with Japanese early childhood educators conducted for *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited,* this time looking for comments on peripherally involved children. We also re-interviewed some of the informants who had participated in the study and asked them to again watch and comment on the fighting scenes in the videos. We asked these informants follow-up questions about children on the periphery of the fights and about the terms they used to refer to these children. We also re-edited the fighting scenes in the Komatsudani and Madoka videos. We went back to the originally shot uncut footage, this time selecting more wide angle shots, which showed not just the fights' protagonists but also the children on the periphery. The videos were shot with two cameras, with one usually on tighter focus, the other wider. The edited videos featured mostly close-ups of the fighting children, with the wider shots used mostly only to establish the scene. In contrast, the new edited versions include more of the wide shots to better show peripherally involved children. We used these re-edited videos as interviewing cues with Japanese informants.

APPENDIX D

METHOD SECTION FROM "THE JAPANESE HANDS-OFF APPROACH TO

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AS

A FORM OF CULTURAL PRACTICE"

Method

The method I am using to study the MEXT approach is an extension of the

video-cued multivocal ethnographic interviewing method employed in the

Preschool in Three Cultures studies. The video-cued multivocal ethnographic

method was developed by Joseph Tobin and his colleagues for the study

Preschool in Three Cultures: Japan, China, and the United States (1989). Here is

how the method is introduced in the original book:

> In the "Preschool in Three Cultures" method, the video's function is
>
> neither for data collection nor as description, but instead the videos are
>
> used as rich non-verbal cues designed to stimulate reflection. The video is
>
> used to provoke reflection not just from the teachers videotaped, but also
>
> from their colleagues, their supervisors, and from educators in other cities
>
> and in other countries. The steps in the method are as follows: (1) we
>
> videotaped a day in a preschool; (2) edited the tape down to 20 minutes;
>
> (3) showed the edited tape to the classroom teacher, and asked her to
>
> comment and offer explanations; (4) held a focus-group made up of the
>
> preschool staff to create a discussion of the edited tape; (5) held focus-
>
> group discussions with the staff of other preschools around the country (to
>
> address the question of typicality); and (6) held focus group discussions
>
> with the staff of preschools in the two other countries in the study.

Specifically, I showed a Japanese MEXT official as well as a preschool

director a video used in the *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* study, using the

video as a jumping off point for a discussion of how and why MEXT employs

such a soft and indirect approach to influences preschool curricular practices.

Each interview took about an hour and a half and held in Tokyo in 2009.

APPENDIX E

THE LIST OF THE SITES AND THE INFORMANTS

Interview (June and July 2009) The List of the Sites and the Informants

Youchien (25)	Tokyo (15)	Public (8)	Hutaba Yochien in Sinagawa-ku	Director and 7 Teachers [Focus Group]
		Private (7)	Madoka Youchien (The videotape captured)	Director and 4 Teachers [Focus Group] 2 Teachers from the other private preschool
	Kyoto (10)	Public (8)	Huzoku Yochien	Director and 7 Teachers [Focus Group]
		Private (2)	Senzan Youchien	Director and 1 Teacher
Hoikuen (15)	Tokyo (8)	Public (6)	Suginami-ku Shibuya-ku	Director and 3 Teachers [Focus Group] 2 Teachers
		Private (2)	2 Teachers	2 Teachers
	Kyoto (7)	Public (0)	None	None
		Private (7)	Komatsudani Hoikuen (The videotape captured)	Director and 6 Teachers [Focus Group]
Expert (3)	Tabata Noriko		Komazawa Woman's Junior College, Professor of Department of Childhood and Care	
	Iwaki Akemi		The University of Tokyo, Professor of Department of Graduate School of Education	
	Kuroda Yuki		The National Institute of Special Needs Education, President	
Total	43		Director 6, Teachers 34, Expert 3	

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

Follow Up Questions

I began the interviews by pointing to a scene from the video and asking "What do you think about this scene?" and "What would you do in this situation?" After these questions, I asked follow-up questions that depended on what they said, the words they used, and the direction of their comment. I had four categories of questions in mind during these interviews:

1. Preschool teacher's beliefs about social emotional development
2. Preschool teacher's beliefs about the pedagogy of social emotional development
3. Where do these beliefs come from?
4. How do the backgrounds and roles of each informant connect to their beliefs?

Specifically I asked:

1. "What do you think about this scene?"

"What are these children doing?"
"What do you mean by the word X?"
"Have you ever used the work X?"
"Can you give me some examples of when you use this expression?"
"What does this term mean to you?"
"How does it related to children's social emotional development?"
"Why do they use this word?"

2. More directive follow-up questions

"Can you explain why the teacher in the video did not intervene in the fight?"
"What is the goal having older children play with babies?"
"Why does she let them watch the interaction?"
"Why does she perform feeling in front of children?"

3. Focus on variations

A. Differences between approaches in Kyoto and Tokyo (regional differences), in Public and Private, in Buddhist and non-Buddhist, and in Youchien and Hoikuen
B. Do teachers and directors see differences in new versus experienced teachers?

4. Where teachers learned their beliefs about social emotional development of children in preschool

      A. What they learned (or didn't learn) at the university (including student teaching)
      B. Apprenticeship learning (from a mentor teacher)
      C. Observational learning
      D. Teacher talk in the teachers' office area (as described by Peak)
      E. Teacher study groups (as described by Lewis)
      F. From the experience of being a parent

5. Background Questions

      A. How long they have taught
      B. If they have children
      C. If they are religious
      D. Which university they attended

6. Questions about Gender

      "Do you think men and women have difference beliefs about emotions?"
      "Do you think men and women have different beliefs about supporting children's emotional development?"
      "Do you think should boys and girls feel and show emotion in the same way?" "Do you think the goals for the emotional development of boys and girls are the same?" "How do you help boys and girls learn gender appropriate ways to show emotion?"