

Asian Education Symposium Report (Session 3)

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Professor Kawamura and Ms. Lili Katsoco from Campinas State University (Brazil), Mr. Haruyuki Adachi from Toyooka City Toyooka Kita Junior High School Teacher, Professor Jang-Ho Son from the Daegu National University of Education, and Professor Won-Hee Lee also from Daegu National University of Education presented keynote lectures titled “Educational history and vision for Brazilians of Japanese descent in Japan,” “Build on overseas experience, promote local identity and develop international qualities-apply local ‘stork’ educational assets and strive to nurture a foundation (fundamentals) for living in local areas,” “Daegu National University of Education Eco-School Project,” and “Internationalization and educational leadership” respectively.

Professor Kawamura, from the perspective of being Brazilian of Japanese decent herself and a researcher on the immigration of Brazilians, spoke on the schooling environment of Brazilians of Japanese Decent in Japan and highlighted associated problems. Pointed out were the increasing seriousness of problems with the sudden increase in descendants of Japanese Brazilian workers such as non-attendance, dropping out and school maladjustment; pre-existing underlying causes of prejudice and discrimination; the instability of parents’ jobs, working arrangements and frequent moving (re-location); direct causes such as the lack of a multi-cultural (educational) system and curriculum in Japanese schools; and, inadequate Japanese language education due to the lack of a systematic approach and financial resources.

Mr. Adachi lectured on making use of his experiences as a teacher at a Japanese school in Mexico, and gave details on his track record of practical educational research and training in the simultaneous nurturing of local identity and multi-cultural coexistence. A rich report was given on the aspects of developing “coexistence” with a multi-cultural perspective between students and teachers from the fostering of local ‘stork’ educational assets leading to the enhancement of relations between local peoples and understanding of local history and culture along with exchanges starting between Korean and German junior high school students. “Stork” is not merely a symbol for connecting local and international people; it is also a symbol that emphasizes the importance of “coexistence.”

Professor Son introduced the Eco-School Project, a curriculum developed exclusively by Daegu National University of Education, applying his specialty in agronomy, for the education of the "life, environment and agriculture" part of the Practical Arts. The Practical Arts constitutes part of the subjects in the official elementary school curriculum of Korea. This curriculum is intended for all Daegu National University of Education sophomores. Programs developed such as the school

grounds which were developed and used for biology fieldwork and eco-environmental education, for understanding water consumption and conservation, for waste management and recycling education, and for organic agriculture and foods were introduced. Professor Son stressed that this kind of environmental education is a global issue, and from the perspective of global education, is an important cornerstone of education for international understanding.

Professor Lee, with an academic presentation, stressed the necessity for educators to not only teach, but also to learn of their own accord and exhibit leadership within an environment of continuing globalization. According to Professor Lee, the classic functional relationship of educational administration (leadership) -educator (teaching) and student (learning) - is within the context of continuing globalization, being challenged. Educators must learn of their own accord and exhibit leadership while teaching. This is because globalization brought about changes on a global scale and made the arrival of information and learning societies inevitable. Educators need to seize the initiative of their own accord and commit to creating learning communities within a framework that is changing dramatically. Primarily, educators must exhibit leadership as proactive learners for the sake of education for international understanding.

During the discussion panel, Osaka City Educational Center director Ms. Yongia Song, Mr. Hiroyuki Akiyoshi a Kasai City Yogo School Teacher, Associate Professor Duk-Hoi Koo of Daegu National University of Education, and Professor Keum-ju Bang of Seoul National University of Education provided questions and comments, and expressed their personal views on the 4 keynote lectures.

Ms. Song, based on her experience of dealing with problems of returnee and foreign students in Osaka as a Japanese Korean, asked Professor Kawamura several questions: whether the immigration situation of Japanese Brazilian (and descendents) has brought about some kind of change in Japanese schools or in Japanese; whether this situation is not simply the transplanting of a foreign culture; and, what has changed, and what has not changed. Further, she praised the “stork” practice at Toyooka Kita Junior High School, and inquired as to how the “stork” practice was positioned within the overall curriculum, and also as to how it was coordinated with other teachers. Further, while she agreed with the theory of Professor Lee who emphasized the need for educators to not only teach, but also exhibit leadership as learners in an environment of continuing globalization, she asked how that would be realized and how it would be put into practice from the educational perspective of the next generation that will bear the responsibility of (implementing) that theory. Finally, Ms. Song gave a broad overview of the historical process of the involvement and initiative of teachers and parents for returnee and foreign students in Osaka that gave fruition to the establishment of the “Home Educational Center” (4 elementary schools and 4 junior high schools). Following, she concluded with the suggestion from the perspective of the next generation that will bear responsibility for the future Asian community, that there is the necessity of research into

education for international understanding and based on that research for co-operation of exchanges between educators in neighboring Asian countries.

Based on his 2 year experience in Kenya as a technical assistance project expert in providing guidance for secondary school natural science teacher training, Mr. Hiroyuki Akiyoshi spoke of the work he had done towards education for international understanding through numerous lectures, research committees, and international exchange programs since returning from abroad. In order to bring to fruition education for international understanding, he emphasized the necessity of steady effort in acquiring, turning into tutoring material, creating a “stork” and sharing the rich experiences of people having lived abroad.

Professor Koo praised the "stork" practice at Toyooka Kita Junior High School, and inquired of Mr. Adachi the difficulties in incorporating the "stork" practice in all grades. He then presented a video on ICT campaign in an English secondary school showing ITC education as effective in promoting education for international understanding.

Professor Bang introduced the multi-cultural musical perspective in which he explained that through experiencing ethnic music, sentiments and sensitivities such as empathy, tolerance, and acceptability are nurtured opening the way for multi-cultural coexistence. He then suggested that education for international understanding with IT would be effective-a format for the real-time exchanging and discussions of ethnic music.

In the later half of the discussion panel, keynote speakers answered questions.

In response to Ms. Song's question, Professor Kawamura said that the immigration of Japanese Brazilian workers was not only simply the transplanting of a foreign culture, but the cause of many conflicts and troubles. And, that these issues have still not been resolved after 10 years, though. He went on to say that the causes, on the one hand, are the prejudice, sense of discrimination, stereo-typical bias of Japanese, the inadequacy of systemic measures guaranteeing Japanese language education, and the view that Japanese Brazilian descendents are empty vessels to be filled with Japanese culture. On the other hand, Professor Kawamura said causes are the unstable working arrangements of Japanese Brazilian workers' jobs resulting frequent moving (re-location).

Mr. Adachi response to Ms. Song and Professor Koo as follows. He said that since Toyooka is rural Japan, it was difficult to get local people and teachers to comprehend the meaning and concept of education for international understanding. However, within tasks that they could do themselves, people gradually started to realize the necessity and importance of education for international understanding. Since the “stork” practice was cross-curriculum, through the co-operation of natural science, social studies, Japanese, and English teachers a co-operative organization structure emerged. Realization of education for international understanding is not possible through the efforts of a single teacher, but is through co-operation with many other teachers. In response to Ms. Song's question, Professor Lee explained that a relationship between teachers, as

primary learners, and children (students) should obviously be realized. He compared implementation with the example of a lesson on the birth process of a new born explaining that it is possible to be realized.

Although there was not enough time for adequate discussions, the session was meaningful from an overall perspective. It could be said that relating the views in these keynote lectures and of panelists to the theme for this session, “Application and Co-operation of Education for International understanding Resources,” is an issue for the future.