

Transnational Learning: A Review of Lesson Study in Japan

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Introduction

Japanese education has received widespread attention in western industrialized countries and some nations (developing countries) have begun to learn from Japanese education.

“Look East”

It is thought, however, that the high quality of Japanese educational practice and teachers' development that are so highly evaluated by the west vary considerably depending on the educational setting.

Lesson Study (Jugyou Kenkyuu)

Within lesson study, it is possible that the classroom can be a model for teachers to promote significant change in their careers, by serving not only as a place of work but also as a source of professional development.

Lesson study as collaborative research is thought to make possible the exchange of experiences between teachers, collaborative planning, participatory learning, the enhancement of professional dialogue among teachers, and teachers' reflection.

Spirit of Lesson Study

Reflection
Collaboration
Continuous
Kaizen &
Learning by doing

Collaboration

For most Japanese teachers, learning and teaching is collaborative work and the best training is where ideas and experiences are shared and reflection is accomplished through discussion in small groups and networks.

Reflection

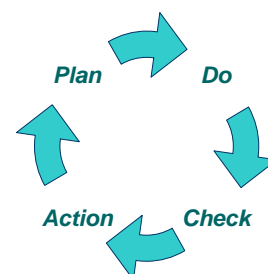
The growth of teachers as part of their own life stories is important for understanding the meaning of maturity and for enriching the educational experience of “self as teacher”.

Rather than learning about theoretical, teachers are thought to acquire skills through a practical quality circle (questioning, planning, acting, observing, reflecting and replanning) and collaborative research related to the classroom activities that comprise lesson study.

Thorough Lesson Study

- Teachers learn on the job;
- Teachers are learners in their classrooms and in their schools, and they are capable of making decisions about how they should improve themselves;
- Teachers learn from going through a process of planning, teaching, reflecting, and feedback on decision-making in practice;
- Teachers learn through cooperation in planning lessons, participation and observation in each other's classrooms, and through daily discussion and communication about teaching improvements;
- Teachers learn from observing themselves, engaging in practice, and through participation in self-directed projects.

Lesson Study as “Collaborative Research on Teaching”



Kaizen

This approach (planning, acting, observing, and reflecting) enables teachers to learn from each other and to improve their teaching in practice. These activities provide teachers with opportunities to raise their professional skill level and their relationship with students, as well as engaging in research activities, thus emphasizing learning by doing, improvement of teaching, and rising the quality of teachers.

Transfer of Japanese Approach

Many Japanese educational practices have been examined by American educators for possible application in the United States. This is one which we believe has been overlooked and yet has the potential for significant impact, especially as more schools become site-based managed.

Transnational Learning

The Integration of lesson study into

- United States of America education context
- Iranian teacher training system
- Chinese school improvement
- Hong Kong learning study
- Germany teacher education & training
- Singapore teachers professional development



Tools for Transfer

- the kind of lesson plan;
- the teaching materials and the role of textbooks;
- the teaching methods used;
- the observational skills necessary;
- the detailed role of participants;
- the method for evaluating the teaching-learning process;
- the method of recording classroom activities (ethnographic notes, tape-record, video record);
- the method of writing a manuscript of all classroom activities transcribed from recorded data;
- a discussion of the most important points and classroom activities at the feedback sessions;
- the method of reporting, learning from, and using teachers' opinions about lesson study in the next lesson (Fernandez and Chokshi, 2002).

Deliver Ethnographic Approach

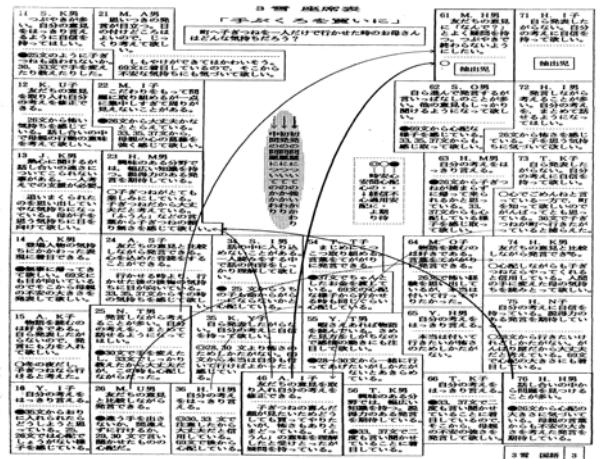
Recently research on lesson study at Nagoya University has emphasized observation skills and fieldnotes for recording classroom activities. The main reason is because when teachers are using tape and video recorders they feel that have nothing to do because the machines are recording everything. The Nagoya University research group asked schoolteachers to observe classroom activities and write ethnographic notes.

Case of Cooperation of Nagoya University and the Tokai City Board of Education

The Nagoya University research group has a collaborative project with the Tokai City Board of Education in Aichi Prefecture to develop an ethnographic approach that effectively observes, records, analyzes and reports lesson study. In a case study of Fukushima Junior High School in Tokai City, the contents of the lesson study process were recorded and analyzed. The researchers examined records and transcript data and compared teachers' shorthand and ethnographic notes focusing on their discussions at reflection meetings. The research group found that teachers created a number of new strategies for changing teaching styles, understanding students and for designing learning materials.

Plan

- the kind of lesson plan;
- the teaching materials and the role of textbooks;
- the teaching methods used;



Clip 1

DO

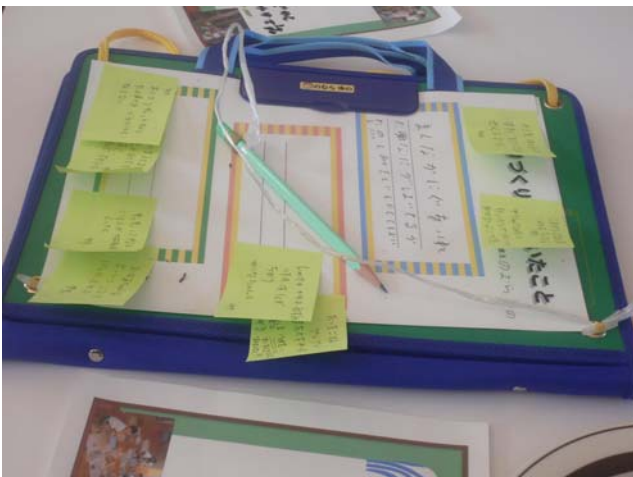
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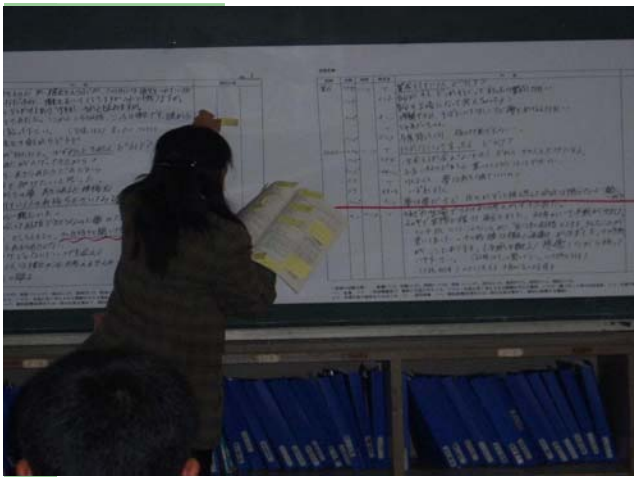


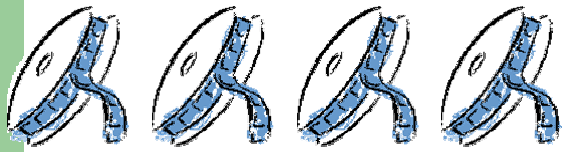
Clip 3

See

- a discussion of the most important points and classroom activities at the feedback sessions;
- the method of reporting, learning from, and using teachers' opinions about lesson study in the next lesson







Clip 11

Clip 12

Clip 14

Clip 15

The Challenges of Implementation “Lesson Study”

From a Cultural Education and Systematic Knowledge Perspective

From Professional Knowledge and Practice Perspective

Iranian Teachers Case p.50



From a Cultural Education and Systematic Knowledge Perspective p.59

It is necessary for teachers to have;

- Systematic knowledge of teaching and learning
- Collaborative skills to work and learn
- Authority to do teaching & learning
- Democratic environment to manage school
- Attention to cooperative learning system
- Share experience and learning from each other

From Professional Knowledge and Practice Perspective p.60-61

Significantly different;

- Social-cultural
- Education & school culture
- More emphasis on teaching than learning
- Forget to focus on teaching not teacher
- No support from University and Society
- More focus on outcome than process
- Hairy to see the result of project especially related to students academic achievement

Strategies for Effective Implementation

- Build relationships
- Identify the players
- Bring people together
- Use, or build common language
- Be prepared to address questions of standards and accountability
- Look for commonalities
- Look for shared values
- Be about learning
- Have a bias for action
- Remember that your work, our work, is the work of lifetime (Berreth, 1999).

Transnational Learning: What Japanese can Learn

We suppose the 10 strategies encourage Japanese schools to become learning organization and supporting lesson study as a learning model for implementing the *learning community* in school.

More time and research is needed in order the role of lesson study in changing school from an *institutions of teaching & learning* to a *learning organization*.

Conclusion

We reflected on lesson study as a shared professional culture that requires teachers to engage in a cycle of questioning, planning, reflecting, acting, observing, reflecting, revising, and often questioning future lesson plan.

Lesson Study as a Culture

To successfully transfer lesson study to other countries it is necessary to develop a culture conducive

- to collaborative activities,
- to write detailed instructional plans,
- to anticipate students' thinking,
- to learn how to observe classroom activities, and
- to give teachers a central role in developing these practices. Lesson study, is essentially a cultural activity that focuses on teacher-directed learning and classroom-based professional development (Lewis, et. al., 2004; Chokshi and Fernandez, 2004; Watanabe, 2002, Sarkar Arani, 1999a).

Lesson Study as an Alternative Approach

Lesson study brings us an alternative approach to improve teaching-learning process and teachers' professional development. We believe that the world teachers would respond positively to this kind of career professional development view as well.

Thank you