Deconstructing the Child's Nature:
Language, Technology and Pedagogy

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This paper attempts to disturb understandings that have been taken for granted about child and child nature in contemporary Japan. By applying Foucault's notion of governmentality (Foucault, 1977, 1984, 1986, 1991), I assert that there are various technologies which have constructed disciplining and self-disciplining in Japanese schools and that the relationships between the teacher and the child are multiple. Foucault's notion of power is that a multiplicity of actions engenders power, and power operates through discourse associated with the construction of knowledge. Moreover, Foucault's conception of governmentality allows us to rethink the relationships among self, the other, and institutional discourse. Using Foucault's theory allows us to be suspicious about power. Each instance of power relations must be carefully analyzed with the assumption that sometimes many contradictory forms of power may be operating.

First, this paper argues that the construction of the child in Japan, is not an ideological product but rather a discourse that involves a complexity of power relations. The relationship between the teacher and the child is a dual one. Moreover, the reasoning used to construct Japanese understandings of childhood is not simply controlled by the government through its sovereign power but is shaped by multiple technologies.

Second, this paper explores pedagogical issues that arise in the study of the diverse ways in which teachers shape their teaching methods and classroom practice. Japanese teachers exercises disciplinary power which normalizes the child. What I consider the disciplining of the child are not such things as school regulations which legitimately restrain the child. Instead, I am referring to the multiple technologies that discursively construct the child. The use of positive language, for example, normalizes teachers as those whose praise.

Third, this paper indicates that Japanese children are simultaneously governed and disciplined by others, such as teachers, and self-governing and self-disciplining. Disciplining children is for the purpose of making children self-disciplined. By exercising self-discipline, children approach self-understanding, self-esteem and self-actualization. The distinctive feature of self-discipline in Japanese schools tends to be self-classification, that is, one knows how to apply oneself to classified categories, such as the "problem child," "not self-motivated" or "lacking group awareness" according to the teacher. Once a child has been classified, he/she disciplines him/herself to become "normal." Children who practice self-discipline must believe that it is for their own good. The process of practicing self-discipline is enjoyable; at least one is made to feel that it is enjoyable and fulfilling.

This paper concludes with the assumption that what Japanese children are, and how they become what they are, are effects of multiple power relations. It urges readers to be skeptical about the discourses regarding "normal" or
"reasonable" children. The categorization of normality or abnormality involves methods of inclusion and exclusion. It is hoped that this paper will stimulate dialogue and debate about the interaction between power, culture and the various constructions of the childhood.

The methodology of this study includes textual analyses and classroom observations. The primary texts are: a) recent teacher guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education of Japan which includes Gakusyuushidoryo, known in English as the Course of Study; b) teachers' diaries, together with some other teachers writings; and c) in-service teacher training textbooks. In-service teacher training textbooks are issued by the Ministry of Education but are actually written by the school teachers and educational researchers. In Japan, in-service teacher training textbooks play an important role on training teachers. In this paper, instead of discussing how in-service teacher training textbooks represent the ideology of the Ministry of Education, I will explore what kind of pedagogical issues the in-service teacher training textbooks raise and how they construct childhood in contemporary Japan. The teaching observation took place in a public elementary school over the course of three months when I worked as a specialist for immigrant children.

**Multiple Disciplinary Technologies of Normalizing Students**

In this section, I explore the construction of teaching and learning in Japan—not as an ideological product but as a discourse that involves a complexity of power relations. Schooling is not simply under the control of the governmental sovereign power but is shaped by multiple technologies, and a variety of self-disciplinary techniques is a part of schooling. I consider the normalizing technologies of the child as not such things as school regulations which legitimately restrain the child, but as multiple technologies that discursively construct the child.

**The Usage of Positive Language**

One normalizing technology is the use of praise. Praise, as used by teachers is a dividing practice that creates dispositions and distinctions among students. Praise, as a normalizing technology, functions in teacher's construction of "good" or "bad" students.

Teachers are encouraged to use positive expressions to promote students self-advancement. The Ministry of Education has instructed teachers with the following guidelines:

Teachers recognize students individually, encourage them and often praise students for their improvement. Students, therefore, will have the feeling of satisfaction about their efforts and have a strong will to accept the challenge of the next task (Monbusyo, 1985, p. 22; my translation).

The following was a simulated lesson scene in a elementary arithmetic class described in a teacher training textbook (Jinbo & Harano, 1982, pp. 160-161; my translation):

Teacher: What is 2 and 3? (Many students raised their hand. The teacher pointed to Taro.)
Taro: Seven.
Teacher: Really? Taro thinks seven is the result. Hanako, what do you think?
Hanako: Six.
Teacher: Well, Hanako thinks it is six. Is that so? Jiro, what do you think?
Jiro: Five!
Teacher: Certainly! The answer is five. Taro, Hanako, do you two understand why 2 and 3 is 5? Both of your answers are wrong, but both of you didn't hesitate to present your ideas. I like this kind of students.
This teacher praised rather than criticized children who got wrong answers. This type of pedagogy, the use of positive words, is supposed to promote children's attitude toward learning and self-advancement.

At the same time, the strategy of using positive expressions normalizes teachers as those whose praise will have a motivating effect on children, and it normalizes children as those who need motivation and whose motivation is subject to a teacher's praise. Teacher's praise is directed at changes in children's habits. However, in this notion of praise the body is disciplined as well as mind. The present idea of praise brings into being certain dispositions related to how the child is to act and be.

The example of a teacher directing children to use positive words can be found in a teacher training textbook published by the Ministry of Education (Monbusyo, 1989, pp. 35-40). An elementary first grade teacher let students encourage each other. When someone faces a difficult task, others say "ganbare (Never say die)" to cheer them on. Positive phrases, such as "good job," "nice student," and "kind child," fly past each other in the classroom. One student who was praised by others said: 'I'm so happy. It makes me feel confident.'

The Japanese word "ganbare," generally speaking, means "persevere" in English. According to Webster's dictionary, the definition of persevere is to "continue steadily in doing something hard; sticking to a purpose or an aim; never giving up what one has set out to do." Literally, it can be translated to "Hold on!" "Bear up!" "Never say die!" "Keep it up!" "Keep at it!," etc. All of these phrases mean: "whatever activity you are engaged in, do your best to the very end" (Duke, 1986, p. 123).

The spirit of ganbare is deeply embedded in the Japanese society. Duke (1986, p. 122) has summarized the idea below:

Throughout the lifetime of the Japanese they are surrounded, encouraged, and motivated by the spirit of ganbare. It begins in the home. The school takes it up from the first day the child enters the classroom. It continues through graduation. The company then thrives on it. It engulfs every facet of society. It is employed in work, study, and even at play and leisure. Ganbare is integral to being Japanese.

It seems to be "natural" for teachers to use ganbare. Generally speaking, it is believed that "making children ganbare" mean "building up children," "developing children's abilities" and "improving children," and that "making children ganbare" is for the children's sake. Every child always has to ganbare, no matter whether one is at the top or the bottom, no matter what one is doing. If a child fails in an examination, the teacher would say "ganbare!" to encourage this student do better; whereas if a student does perfectly in an examination, the teacher would still say "ganbare" to keep the child working hard. The child has to ganbare "... do his best in whatever endeavor he has set before him. The tennis club, the mathematics lesson, the lunchtime duty, the osoji (clean classroom and schoolyard), the afterschool yobiko (preparatory school), and the entrance examination are all pursued with a sense of ganbare" (Duke, 1986, p. 143).

The use of ganbare, as both a technology of disciplinary power and a technology of the self, has discursively constructed what it means to be a "normal" child. According to Foucault (1988), technologies of disciplinary power determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends, whereas technologies of the self "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so
as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (p.18). This contact between the technologies of disciplining others and those of the self-disciplining is what Foucault called governmentality.

The use of ganbare itself is an unquestioned way of thinking and talking about self in Japanese society. Ganbare is a governing practice, creating particular ways in how children learn to "think, and see themselves in the word" (Popkewitz and Brennan, 1997, p. 293). In this sense, ganbare is a disciplinary technology of the self. Through the continuous, repetitive use of teacher's ganbare, students internalize this way of thinking about themselves.

Moreover, such spirit of perseverance tends to be exhibited within a group. In Japanese, there are many expressions which construct the conception of collective spirit, e.g. "minna de ganbare (let's work hard together)," "minna tomodachi (let's be friends)," "minna de nakayoku (let's get along well)" or "minna de asobou (let's play together)." Teachers use these phrases very frequently at school. These phrases have discursively constructed the notion of group-oriented spirit which I will further discuss later in this paper.

Schooling is what Popkewitz (1998) has pointed: "the production of the rules embodied in action and participation" (p. 39). Such production as a disciplinary power exercised through Japanese schools. This disciplinary power is linked with multiple technologies such as praise, the use of ganbare, group activities, etc.

**Normalizing Students: Through Writing Journals**

Another technology which influences the normalizing of the child is writing journals, called "Seikatsu Noto (Daily Life Notebook)." Foucault (1980) has explained: "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true..." (p. 131).

Making children write journal is teachers' daily work prescribed in the *Course of Study* and teacher training textbooks. Students write in the *Seikatsu Noto* every day. The style of the *Seikatsu Noto* is described below (Fukuzawa, 1996, p. 305):

Spaces for school days were a record of homework assignments, with a place to check review of the day's work and a block to use as a diary of events and feelings. The space for Sunday was a time line which students color coded [to indicate] how they spent their day. In the small section at the bottom entitled "reflection on this week," students checked off answers to questions about how virtuous they had been: Had they done good deeds, helped at home, studied enough, done their home work and been healthy?

*Virtuous* here is coded as good deed, helping at home, studying enough, finishing home work and being healthy. The particular Japanese discourses have constructed the notion of virtuous as being sound in mind and body. Generally and socially speaking, it is believed in Japan that one will not be sick if one has strong mind and a fulfilling life. Sickness is considered somewhat *non-virtuous*. Therefore, for a student, being healthy is as important as studying hard, finishing home work or helping at home.

Students hand in the *Seikatsu Noto* to the teacher at various intervals (usually once a week). After reading, the teacher writes down his or her comments on the Daily Life notebook. The student's daily life becomes a text which the teacher comments on and tries to
modify. One teacher guideline issued by the Ministry of Education suggests how teachers can reform the "non-virtuous" students by responding to their journals:

a) (The teacher) lets the student look straight at his/her present conduct, and helps the student figure out whether this conduct was compelled by others or caused by his or her own will.
b) While trying not to control the student's free thinking, (the teacher) stimulates the student to judge whether his/her present conduct is the best choice for himself/herself and the society.
c) If the student realizes that his/her conduct is not desirable, (the teacher) suggests to the student that s/he makes a new conduct plan, and that it is important to make the plan achievable in order to have a successful experience.
d) (The teacher) intently watches the student's action and encourages the student. (The teacher) praises the student for his-/her improvement. When the student did not materialize his/her plan, (the teacher) does not blame or punish the student but advises him/her to make a new plan (Monbusyo, 1990, p. 46, my translation).

This strategy of how to save the "non-virtuous" children provides teachers with a normalizing management of children. What it means by "virtuous" or "non-virtuous" is politically, socially and historically constructed.

However, in contemporary Japanese education, generally speaking, a "non-virtuous" child is individualistic and tends not to follow traditional norms. It is through writing a journal that children are discursively constructed and normalized by the coded value which is inscribed in the teacher's response. Thus, journal writing is a construction of the self though technologies of disciplinary power and technologies of the self is involved in multiple power relations. These power relations involve the use of ganbare, the incitement to develop a strong sense of group belongingness, praise, and journal writing.

**Collective Activities**

Generally speaking, Japanese students are famous for their collective behavior. They wear the same uniform, eat the same school meals, and act alike. For Japanese, this disposition tends to be praiseworthy, whereas many foreigners see it as enigmatic. What I am concerned about here is not to judge whether this behavior is good or bad but about what technologies effect the value of group-orientation.

The sports day is held in every school playground in the spring and fall, respectively. The distinctive feature of the Japanese sports day is that the sports day is not for the sake of sports. For the school, it is to improve students' collective spirit. Usually, all the games are group games, especially at elementary or junior high school. Group games must include everyone in the class. Using "minna de ganbare" (Let's work hard together) to express the Japanese sports day is certainly an apt remark.

For example, rope skipping, relay and ball rolling are typical class versus class games within a grade. Students begin practicing many weeks before the sports field day. The motto is "minna de ganbare." All class members have to take part in group games. If one child, for instance, cannot master rope skipping, the others will encourage and help him/her. The child who cannot do rope skipping, puts in his/her full effort, "issyou-kenmei ganbare (try as hard as s/he can)" in order not to obstruct the whole class. Trying together, sharing the same experience, enjoying the same happiness, all of these are addressed. The Japanese sports day can be seen as a strategy
of normalizing students.

In Japan, cleaning classrooms and schoolyards is naturally understood as the students' duty. The cleaning activities in Japanese schools is not only for the sake of hardening the student's body but also for disciplining the student's soul. A teacher-training textbook issued by the Ministry of Education demonstrates how a elementary school first year class' group consciousness was improved through cleaning classrooms (Monbusyo, 1989, pp. 96-101). Choosing a job and figuring out how to accomplish it in a group developed the idea that "the group belongs to all and everyone belongs to the group," which means each individual's work contributes to the entire group while the group is the reason why each individual exists. In disciplinary power, the discourse of self confidence functions as a technology of group membership and self identification. It is believed that the task of cleaning is essential to the students' education and emotional well-being and they regard this duty as 'a major part of education'-ways to teach students how to work with others and how to care for themselves" (LeTendre, 1996, p. 285).

A routine or ritual of morning school meeting is another strategy for developing collective consciousness. The Ministry of Education instructs schools and teachers that "[For students,] listening to the principal's and the vice-principal's moral discourse in the morning school meeting is effective in cultivating the habit of collective activities such as paying attention to others' speech and forming ranks" (Monbusyo, 1985, pp. 23). Besides the morning whole school meeting, there are two short meetings (usually ten minutes) a day and one long meeting a week. The daily meetings are called "asa no gakkyukai (morning class meeting)" and "owari no gakkyukai (closing class meeting)." Students take turns being in charge of the meeting. Usually two students are responsible for one day. The two students work together to organize the meeting. In the morning class meeting, students talk about what activities they have to accomplish during that day; and in the closing class meeting, they summarize how activities, decided in the morning class meeting, have been done. The two students on duty usually praise good students and good deeds rather than criticize bad students for bad conduct in the closing class meeting.

The weekly meeting is held at the end of the week and is run by the class officer. The purpose of the weekly meeting is to summarize the students' work during the week and to exhort class members to "ganbare" for the next week. Through such experiences, students learn how to work with peers and how to organize the class. Students are reiterating the "official" discourse. It looks like students are in charge, but they act in ways that are "normal" and they embody a discursively constructed subjectivity. It is unthinkable for students to run the meeting in a critical or subversive way.

School lunch is considered a technology of improving collective consciousness, as well. Unlike some other countries, e.g. America, where students have lunch at the cafeteria, Japanese elementary and junior high schools do not have cafeterias, and students are not allowed to bring their own lunch to the school. Students have to eat lunch in the classroom. The school lunch is supplied by the school. School lunch began soon after the World War II for the purpose of nutrition. However, in the present day, providing school lunch is not for the sake of nutrition any more but for disciplining students.

Every day, there are four or five students who are on duty. Their jobs are to bring lunch to the classroom, serve the meal to all students, get together tableware and bring them back to the kitchen. All students sit in a fixed group to eat lunch. The time when students should start
to eat lunch is when the students who are on duty make a sign and all students say "Itadaki masu (Let's start)" all at once; and the time to finish lunch is when the students who are on duty give a signal and all students say "Gothiso sama desita (Thank you for the meal)" all at once again. No one is allowed to eat before or after. Leaving a dish unfinished is prohibited. Talking and joking during the lunch time are also forbidden.

In the U.S., lunch time is a "break" from the pressures of the classroom. Students are very much free to talk, eat and joke as they please. Their lunchroom behavior is not supposed to be like their classroom behavior. Eating is personal-not part of schooling. Unlike the U.S., in Japanese schools, not even eating is exempt from the demands of public convention. The U.S. school system’s tradition of including "breaks" for lunch and recess acknowledges and classroom demeanor is somewhat artificial (you only have to act that way in the classroom). However, the Japanese system gives the impression that classroom discipline is "real life." It is the way all parts of life (including eating lunch) ought to be lived. School lunch functions as a disciplinary technology to train students not only in proper table manners but also in collective consciousness.

Group activities are often recommended by the Ministry of Education. The following example given by the Ministry of Education has shown how group activities changed a student’s group awareness (Monbusyo, 1989, pp. 108-113).

There was an elementary third grade male student who was considered to lack a collective spirit. He often joked around during group activities, was irresponsible about his job, and took no interest in class events when he thought he had nothing to do with those events. The teacher conducted a robot-making event whose purpose was to increase this student's group awareness since "holding down, tying up and pasting, all this work needs other people's help" (Monbusyo, 1989, p. 111, my translation). The male student worked with some other students. "While making the robot, he not only had fun but also recognized that he belonged to the group" (Monbusyo, 1989, p. 113, my translation).

Language, journal writing, cleaning, meeting and school lunch, as the technologies of student management, are only a few examples that the Ministry of Education instructs schools and teachers to apply. These technologies discursively construct and normalize the "reasonable" students as: hard-working, kind, cooperative and having collective awareness. Such reasonableness has become the Japanese students' nature, and this nature has been often taken for granted. There is nothing natural, necessary or inevitable about the present Japanese students' nature. The value as to what is considered reasonable, of course, is socially constructed and historically contingent.

**The Student as a Self-disciplined Subject**

Foucault's conception of power has provided for a complexity of power relations. In the governmental state, individuals are not only the target or object of government. The relationship between governing and the governed is a complex one. Individuals are simultaneously governed subjects, and take part in their own governing. Individuals become "the correlate and instrument" of the governmental state (Burchell, 1991, p. 127). On the one hand, the state outlines a possible art of government which reckons on numerous techniques for disciplining individuals to be rational citizens. Taking care of one's own health, hygiene and education, for example, are responsibilities of reasoning citizens. On the other hand, individuals have shifted from rationally-governed subjects to spontaneous problem-solvers, that is, they practice the appropriate forms of
"technologies of the self."

The Ministry of Education has elaborated strategies for teachers: "Disciplining students is for the purpose of making students self-disciplined. By exercising self-discipline, students approach self-understanding, self-esteem and self-actualization" (Monbusyo, 1982, p. 44; my translation). This type of power relationship is a complicated one. It is the opposite of the traditional sovereign power issue which assumes that power comes from the top and that power is employed by the sovereign to rein in the populace. The new type of power is of unknown origin. Power only exists when it is exercised, and power circulates.

Self-discipline requires self-motivation. The following story appeared in the teacher training textbook issued by the Ministry of Education. It is about a fifth grade teacher working with a male student who had poor grades in all subjects (Monbusyo, 1989, pp. 89-95). The teacher concluded that the lack of self-motivation and self-esteem were the main reasons which prevented him from studying. In a mathematics class, the teacher wrote questions on the board and let students solve them individually. Seeing that the male student had difficulty solving the problem, the teacher softly put a hint card on his table. Finally, the student solved the problem. The teacher let him present his result to the whole class. It made him feel very honored. After that, the male student started to work hard on mathematics—not only at school but also at home. He became enthusiastic about his study and "enjoyed" working hard. By the end of the semester, he had improved all his studies.

The relationship between discipline and self-discipline is an intricate one. Discipline is to train the students to practice self-discipline for their own good. The technologies of discipline are whose which try to make students be enthusiastic about the task, enjoy the working process and finally acquire self-esteem. By this means, this practice of self-discipline is engaged in the actualization of discipline.

The usage of ganbare, as we have discussed earlier in this paper, is a technology of disciplinary power. Simultaneously, the purpose of using the word of ganbare is to discipline students to exercise self-discipline. The teacher "naturally" uses ganbare and the student accepts ganbare as a "natural" part of his/her life. The student ganbare about everything at home and at school. The student is "naturally" inculcated with ganbarism and s/he believes that ganbare is for his/her own good.

In Japanese schools, teachers are advised to involve students in gakkyu-zukuri (creating classhood). Students "talk about what kind of class they want to be and what chores, promises and goals they will need to become that kind of class" (Lewis, 1996, p. 86). Asa no gakkyukai (morning class meeting), owari no gakkyukai (closing class meeting) and weekly meeting are opportunities for students to exercise power. Students in turn take charge of meetings. Owari no gakkyukai is also called ichinichi no hanseikai (critical self-reflection meeting of the day) and the weekly meeting is also called syumatsu hanseikai (critical self-reflection meeting of the week). During these meetings, students ask themselves: "Have I done anything good? Have I been mischievous? Have I been nice to classmates? Have I tried my best to help classmates? How can I do better? Is there anything I can do in order to make the class better?" Such self-reflection leads students to choose goals for self-improvement.

The Ministry of Education teacher guidelines have shown how such self-discipline can be exercised by the students (Monbusyo, 1989, pp. 54-60). An elementary second grade homeroom teacher struggled to change students' attitude to the whole class and the lessons. The teacher
let students list what kinds of things had happened in the class which made them uncomfortable, and furthermore discussed how to prevent them from happening again. The students "spontaneously" decided to: a) make a carp streamer and put it up in the classroom; b) make strips on which to write rules and hang the strips on the carp streamer; c) put one strip into the carp when the rule has been followed by all class members; d) take the strip out of the carp if anyone broke the rule; and e) have the whole class decide on the rules written on the strips.

The following five rules were made: a) do not exclude anyone from group games; b) share the class ball and long skipping rope with others; c) sit down in the chairs and wait until the bell rings for class; d) do not laugh when someone's answer is wrong; and e) prepare for the next lesson during the break. The first item was followed and the corresponding strip was put into the carp streamer in the first week. Students were looking forward to seeing the swollen carp streamer. By the end of the semester, all strips were put into the carp streamer. Putting strips into the carp streamer, as the teacher concluded, is instilling the rules into students' souls. Although the rules became invisible, they were deeply engraved in the students' minds. Thus, the students practiced self-discipline according to the teacher's expectations, but in a set-up that made it seem as though the students had chosen the rules themselves.

The distinctive feature of self-discipline in Japanese schools tends to be self-classification, that is, one knows how to apply oneself to classified categories, such as the "problem student," "not self-motivated" or "lacking group awareness" according to the advisory teacher. The technologies of discipline that construct a particular identity related to group membership. Then, the classified individual disciplines him/herself to be the normal or natural student in the "normal" classroom discourse. People who practice self-discipline must believe that it is for their own good. The process of practicing self-discipline makes the student feel satisfied with himself/herself.

Conclusion

One may wonder if there is no absolute freedom and autonomy in modern society if the modern individual practices self-discipline and this self-discipline is exercised through desires and pleasures. As we have seen in this paper, the discourses embodied in the in-service teachers training textbooks issued by the Ministry of Education are involved in a complexity of power relations, e.g. discipline and self-discipline. The disciplinary power found in teacher training textbooks seen as technologies are praise, journal writing, and group activities such as cleaning discursively construct the child.

On the other hand, Japanese children are involved in the practice of self-disciplining. Disciplining students is for the purpose of making students self-disciplined. Generally speaking, the teacher training textbooks have discursively constructed "normal" childhood in Japanese schools as being able to exercise self-discipline, to approach self-understanding, to develop self-esteem and to bring about self-actualization. Pedagogy applied by teachers such as positive language usage, group activities, journal writing assignment are all found to be governing practices which create particular children dispositions. These activities are disciplinary technologies of the self. Japanese children internalize particular ways of thinking about the self with teacher-directed activities. The distinctive feature of self-discipline in Japanese schools tends to be self-classification, that is, one knows how to apply oneself to the tacit classified categories, such as the "leadership student," "average student" or "lacking
group awareness." The technologies of discipline construct particular identity related to group membership. Then, the classified individual discipline him/herself to be the "normal" or "natural" child in the "normal" and "natural" classroom discourse.

The use of ganbare itself is an unquestioned way of thinking and talking about self in Japanese society. Ganbare is a governing practice, creating particular ways in which students learn to perceive themselves. In this sense, ganbare is a disciplinary technology of the self. Through the continuous, repetitive use of teacher's ganbare, children internalize this way of thinking about themselves. Moreover, such spirit of perseverance tends to be exhibited within a group. In Japanese, there are many expressions which construct the conception of collective spirit.

The consideration of Foucault's theory in this study was a political strategy. I use Foucault as one of multiple poststructural theorists to open up new possibilities for rethinking systems of reasoning related to pedagogical issue in Japan. It is my hope that this study will usher in new winds to the field of educational research in Japan and also will inspire educational researchers to frame critiques in ways that were previously "unthinkable." Power only exists when it is exercised and circulates. Foucaultian scholars cannot predict in advance where power will work in the future and what power might do or not do. Neither is it possible for researchers to foretell which actions might be forms of "resistance" and which might be "compliance." Each instance of power relations must be carefully analyzed.

Foucault's notion of power enabled me to focus on the construction of child nature in Japanese educational discourses involving convoluted networks of power relations. Governmentality, as a technology of disciplinary power, is a helpful tool in analyzing ways power circulates in Japanese schools. Moreover, in employing Foucault's notion of power to rethink the production of reason in schooling practices, we can read educational discourses differently. Concepts such as governmentality and power/knowledge allowed me to open up new spaces in conceptualizing how the production of reason occurred. In particular, Foucault's notion of power provides us with a method of problematizing and deconstructing the "nature" of what the Japanese child has become. The "nature" of being "good" or "bad" has never been natural. There is nothing natural, necessary, essential or inevitable about the nature of contemporary Japanese children. The value as to what is considered "reasonable" or "desirable" is socially constructed and historically contingent. Nothing is absolute.

REFERENCES


要旨

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戚 傑

本研究では、ミシェル・フーコの権力観、特に「管理論 (governmentality)」に照らして、日本における児童像がいかに教師の多様な教授法によって作り上げられたかについて言説的に検討を行った。

まずは、教育における自由と抑圧の観点から、日本の学校教育システムについて分析を試みた。その結果、日本の学校教育システムにおいて、「学習指導要領」に象徴されるように、政府または政治による、教育における教師の自由に対する制限、学校・教師による学生の自主性等に対する規制や管理の存在が表層的に見て否定できないものの、学校の秩序を根本から保障している要因として、学校・教師による多様な、ユニークでしかも「ソフト」な管理の「テクノロジ (technology)」を広く取り入れられている実態がより重要であることが明らかになった。

次に、ソフトな管理のテクノロジの特徴について考察し、「建設的法化」、「日誌作成」、「集団行動」等に見られるように教師の教授法・学生管理法には誘導的なアプローチが特に多用されていることを指摘した。

最後に、教師の多様な教授法による効用について分析し、それが学生を直接管理することにとどまらず、むしろ学生を「自己管理」にすることに仕向けられる一種の「テクノロジ (technology)」としてより効果を発揮されていることが注目すべきであると結論付けた。

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