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ON THE SELF-EDUCATION OF JAPANESE TEACHERS:

"How have Japanese teachers been improving their own teaching practices?"

by

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1/ Introduction : My personal background.

I am an Educational Psychologist, not an ordinary one but a phenomenologically oriented one. I have been working with practicing teachers, primarily with elementary school teachers, but also with teachers of various levels from Kindergartens to colleges. This was made possible because I had worked with a Japanese master teacher and learned very much from him and his group of teachers. I am now at the University of Tokyo and am teaching on the principles of teaching methods.

2/ The perceived objectives of my encounter with you--the participants of this seminar.

This is my first visit to Philippine. While I was in the U.S.A., about 25 years ago, I had a close friend from Philippine, whose name I recall as Dr. Leopold Yaw, an electrical engineer. From him, I got the impression that Philippine people are very good-natured, kind and hospital to other people, open-minded, fair, and bright. In other words, I have a very good impression of Philippine people. Based only upon a single sample, my above mentioned impression of Philippine people may perhaps[✓] too casual and subjective, but it is so conivncing to me nevertheless. *be*

You may suppose that I have come to Manila to give you some sort of new information about/on Japan, particularly on Japanese education. However, in this modernized society today, I believe, such new information can easily be available otherwise, for example, by watching a TV program on Japan and/or just by getting a glimpse into a Yearbook. I myself would not like to play a role of being a poor substitute for a TV program or a Yearbook. In fact, I will be very unhappy if I were to end up with such a role only. Rather, I have come in person, with much delight, to meet Philippine people. I have come to meet you in person, who have kindly gathered together here today, at least partly, for the purpose of meeting me in person. I have come to "encounter" each of you all, a group of elite Philippine teachers. I have a belief that by knowing the best teachers of a country, one could get to know the future of the country itself, because the future of the country depends so much upon those elite teachers who lead the teachers of the country as a whole. In that sense, I regard you with great respect as people nurturing now the future generations of your country.

Often times, in Japan, I have been invited to talk to groups of teachers, in schools and elsewhere, on the topics of how to improve classroom teachings. In such cases, the objectives of my talks would be to help Japanese teachers become conscious of the meanings of what they are practicing in everyday teaching in schools and also to offer them some useful suggestions,

if any, for improving their own teaching practices of tomorrow. I learned what I give in my lectures, from knowing how Japanese teachers educate themselves: the self-education of Japanese teachers. Here, in Manila, I am very well aware that I am invited to talk not specifically on the topics of improving your own teaching practices. I do know, I am invited to talk on something about Japan, for the objectives of promoting mutual understanding between Philippine people and Japanese people. However, first, would you allow me to assume that you yourself as teachers, like most of my Japanese audiences, would be interested in the topics of improving your own teaching ? Also, would you allow me to believe that to know the lives of Japanese teachers would mean for you to know the Japanese culture and society, quite in the concrete, and the Japanese people, the part of the Japanese people of the same profession as yours. That is to say, by kindly listening to my talk today on the theme of Japanese teacher's self-education, you will hopefully get to know more intimately how Japanese people, in this case the Japanese teachers, are living their everyday lives of teaching, thus will know Japan in a very concrete and meaningful way to you, as Philippine teachers.

In short, today, I would like to talk on the topic of "The self-education of Japanese teachers", in other words, "How have Japanese teachers been improving their own teaching practices". My talk will be based both upon my own experiences with many Japanese teachers and upon my reading of the works of Japanese master teachers.

3/ "Japanese teachers are eager to learn from master teachers of their choice."

In Japan, there exists a long historical tradition among teachers to learn from the Master teachers of their choice, whom they respect and admire.

I would very much like to know whether there is such a tradition in Philippine. If there is, then I would like to know how it is different from and it is same with the Japanese tradition.

The Japanese master teachers I am talking about are those highly experienced teachers whom many teachers around him begin to wish to learn on teaching. In my talk here, please let me use the pronouns he/his/him as generically referring to both males and females. Incidentally, in Japan, the majority of teachers are still males, whereas, as I have learned, the majority are females in Philippine, which may necessitate a little caution to use he/his/him as the pronouns for a teacher. Now, a Japanese master teacher typically would have his own view of children, of teaching, and of teaching profession and so forth. Of course, he is very good at attracting children's interests while teaching. He would give, when appropriate and necessary,

demonstration teachings to interested teachers. He himself is well-educated. He is an attractive person, often a charismatic person. He publishes many papers and books on teaching and on education. Sometimes he is also a good artist, a poet for example. Many teachers often gather together around him to learn from him. He is confident to teach teachers how to teach. Since he himself is excellent at teaching practices, what he preaches on teaching is very much trusted and believed by many teachers, perhaps, far more than University Psychologists or Education professors, for instance. His teaching on teaching is very concrete, thus definitely practical. Many teachers adopt his ideas of teaching and teaching practices. This is the image of a Japanese master teacher. Of course, there are very genuine, truly great and well known master teachers, whose influence covers the whole country of Japan, and also some minor master teachers who have only small local influences. Sometimes, there are also, to my impression, dubious "master teachers" who write books which seem to be just imitations of the genuine master teachers.

4/ Introducing two Japanese master teachers: Enosuke Ashida (1873-1951), and Kihaku Saito (1911-1981)

Among the Master teachers in Japan, who, I believe, are genuine and truly great, I would like to introduce two master teachers, one of whom I had had a personal acquaintance.

Enosuke Ashida 芦田恵之助 (1873-1951):

The first one is Mr. Enosuke Ashida . He was a Kokugo-teacher (Japanese/literature teacher), who was good at teaching children how to read and write. Teaching children how to read a text of an author is, according to his view, to guide children to be able "to be shaken by the author to make echoes (resonances or resounds) with the author". When and if children become able to be shaken to make the echoes with the author, they become able to sympathize with the author's ideas and tastes, and then they become enriched and educated. "To read is to read oneself (読むとは読むなり)" is one of his most well known dictums. He writes, " I would ask ^{自分ごと} children/ students, after reading a text, 'This sounds to my mind/heart as so and so. How does it sound to your true heart ?' " He sincerely encourages children to express faithfully what they truly see, feel and/or think. In this way, he attempts to let children/ students read themselves by reading texts. In his childhood, he himself was a backward child, i.e. a child getting low grade, in school. He regarded this personal biographical fact as a merit rather than a demerit for his being a teacher, because he, as a teacher, can better understand the hearts of many backward children, who are struggling with difficulties in

their classes. He also said, "To read is to read everything in the universe (森羅万象)." In his view, by reading everything in the universe and reading oneself, while reading, one can cultivate one's own mind/heart/spirit (心). He also let children write compositions on the themes they choose on their own (隨意選題). He asked children to write on what they would really like to write, rather than on what the teacher force or ask them to write. By writing what they themselves want to write, they learn to read oneself and also everything in the universe.

Interestingly enough, Ashida, at the age of 45, began to practice "the quiet sitting (静坐)", which is a kind of the mental and physical exercises very much similar to Buddhism Zen meditation. This exercise emphasizes the importance of a special kind of quiet breathing. In the quiet breathing, one breathe out quietly while swelling one's lower abdomen, which needs some excersise to achieve. The quiet sitting had become the backbone of his teaching practice for his life, because it enabled him to reach a level of self-confidence and tranquility of mind, and bodily health as well. I myself have had a little of the quiet sitting exercises, which has been helpful to me also.

His complete works have been published in Japan, which consist of 25 big volumes and are eagerly read by serious teachers for whom Ashida has become the master teacher of their choice.

Kihaku Saitoh (1911-1981) 斎藤喜博:

The second master teacher I would like to introduce is Mr. Kihaku Saito, whom I had had personally known and learned from, between 1971 and 1980. I have many good personal memories of him. He was an excellent teacher, particularly of Kokugo (Japanese/literature), Music, Art and Athletics. He was a well known poet of Tanka, a form of Japanese short poem. As a public elementary school teacher, of course, he had taught every subject matter usually taught in elementary schools. To my impression, he was a very delicate and sensitive person, nervous at times, and a man of full empathy also. He was always emphasizing the great importance and significance of "looking" for teachers. What he means by "looking" is the capacity of teachers to feel the joy of children discovering the meaning of what they are learning, to sense the meanings of children's ambiguous verbal, facial and/or bodily expressions, to see the sorrow expressed in the drawings by children, and to be sensitive to the atmosphere of the class and so forth. He wrote, "In education, looking is everything. Without looking, education does not start." I have learned from him the importance of looking. Many teachers gathered to learn from him. While he was active, several times in a year---spring, summer, fall, and

winter as well, nearly a thousand teachers of all school levels gathered together to stay with him for a couple of days to learn from him and his disciples on the concrete examples of teaching practices. It should be noted that all the teachers participated the meetings on private voluntary basis, so that they had to pay the expenses on their own, which shows their seriousness and eagerness to learn from him. The atmosphere of the meetings were serious and sincere, but critical also.

As I said, Mr. Saito was a Tanka poet. He wrote that his ability/ talent as a teacher was acquired from his serious study of poems and also of teaching practices. Both, he said, need careful and keen eyes for looking. And also a strong sense for simplicity was emphasized.

5/ What is the classroom learning (Jugyou/授業) in Saito's view ?

At this point, I would like to introduce Saito's view of the classroom teaching-learning.

5.1 The original view by Saito.

In his idiosyncratic way of expressing his unique ideas, he described the classroom teaching something like the following:

"Classroom teaching consists in the relationship of tension between the following three components; the essence or contradiction /conflict of the teaching materials, what the teacher wishes/ hopes, and the thinking and feeling of the children. The essence of education and teaching is in the relationship of tension. A classroom instruction without tension cannot be called a Jugyou(授業). / Such a tension relation can be created only because, 1) the teaching materials have their own independent life and orientation, 2) the teacher has his own interpretations of the teaching materials and has a strong wish to let children acquire these interpretations, and 3) the children also have each individual interpretations, thinking and feeling of the teaching materials. Only when these three components makes adequate contacts, by causing complex mutual communication between the teacher and children, the children and the children, the teacher and the materials, and the children and the materials, an agreeable and a dense tension in the classroom is created. Such a classroom teaching full of tense relationships are created by the teacher himself. The teacher can create the new direction of the teaching full of life, only when, by putting himself responsible for the teaching, letting the directions of the materials, the children's thinking, and his own wishes contact and interact each other. This is a very serious and hard job. As a result of such a hard job, during the classroom teaching, collisions/ conflicts are created, concentrations and tensions are born, and the teacher

and children can seek for and approach to the essence. Through such mutual tensions, collisions between concentrations, something ever new are created, and children are shaken by whole bodies and led to open their eyes afresh, by getting to the essence, and become able to bring oneself to a new world." (斎藤喜博著「教育学のすすめ」筑摩書房、1969年 p. 85-87.)

In order to help you get his main ideas, let me paraphrase and interpret his expressions from a phenomenological psychological perspective, which is my own speciality now.

5.2. A modification of Saito's view from a phenomenological psychological perspective.

From a phenomenological psychological perspective, I would modify the above understanding by Saito as follows:

" Classroom teaching consists in the three relationships mutually in tension, in confrontations and communications, between the worlds of the teaching materials, the world of the teacher, and the worlds of the children. The worlds of the teaching materials is, basically, the worlds of sciences and arts, and therefore, also the worlds of scientists and artists. More generally, they could be the worlds of various people. They could also be the worlds of people who make appearances in the worlds of the teaching materials, for example, the characters in novels. In the classroom teaching, the world of the teacher and the worlds of the children encounter, with the mediation of the respective encounter with the worlds of the teaching materials. Many a varied interpretations and understandings appears on a single thing, an object or an event. This is because, that single thing is brought to be situated within the lived world of the teacher and also within every lived world of individual child. Then, because of the many varied views, interpretations and understandings, there appear the "encounter", in other words, conflicts and communications, between/ among the respective worlds. Also there appear tense relationships. As a result, the respective worlds of the teacher and the children become enriched. This is the instruction, the classroom teaching. The "encounter" here is the encounter with the worlds different from one's own lived world. The encounter occurs because the single thing/ matter has different appearances and meanings in each of the different lived worlds. Through the encounters, confrontations and communications, collisions and conflicts, there appear ever more new understandings and interpretations. Through this processes, children move from their old worlds to new worlds. The teacher himself, by helping children move to new worlds, also moves to a new world of his own. This is the nature of the classroom teaching.

I would be very happy to know how this Japanese idea of classroom teaching sounds to your heart, as Ashida would ask.

6/ What is the best kind of teachers, in Ashida's view ?

Let me turn again to Ashida for a moment. In the above mentioned Enosuke Ashida (1873-1951)'s work, three kinds of teachers are mentioned and described.

The first one is those who pays the utmost efforts to preach, tell and inform knowledge effectively to children. The second one is those who would talk, as if to enjoy to recall the memory of their own learning themselves, one's own personal history of the efforts which have been directed to obtaining the present level of the specific knowledge, the level which children are at present making efforts to achieve. The third one is those who hit the vital spot from where the echoes from the children will be heard and who then would enjoy to listen to the echoes.

Among Philippine schools and teachers, which. would you think, will be considered as the best teacher among the three?

Which would you yourself consider as the best and the worst?

Which would you infer as considered in Japan today as the best and the most popular among the average /ordinary teachers ?

Which would you infer as was recommended as the best by the Japanese master teacher Ashida?

In Ashida's view, the third one, the one listening to the echoes, is considered and recommended as the best among the three. Children who have been taught in this way would feel that they certainly had been guided by the teacher but they themselves made the discovery by themselves. The teacher would attempt to step back quietly, would make the least interference, would observe children with warm attention and care, and would limit his own role only within that of approving and appreciating supposedly children's own discoveries.

The first one is considered by Ashida as the poorest. The first kind of teacher, according to Ashida, would be felt by children as too imposing. They can easily become hated by children as a nuisance, Ashida said. This kind of teacher may sometimes kill the children's own desire to listen to their own echoes to the sounds of the scientific and/or artistic works. Children tend to be learning not because they themselves wish to learn but mostly because they are required or forced to learn by their teacher.

The second one is estimated as located in the middle between the other two. This kind of teacher can teach well, if and only if the teacher himself is also studying hard enough. Otherwise, what he talks would not contain much to be learned by children, Ashida said.

The best teacher, the third one, would not claim the children's learning achievement as his own achievement as a teacher. Rather, the teacher would enjoy with children the discoveries the children believe they themselves have made on their own. This is because Ashida believes that the teacher's joy should consist intrinsically in observing children grow well rather than extrinsically in being prized for a good teaching, which is to be demonstrated in children's achievements.

7/ What is the essential roles of teachers, having been discovered in the developmental processes of Takeda's views ?/

Mr. Tsuneo Takeda 武田常夫 (1929-1986) belongs to a younger generation than Saito, actually, he belongs to my generation. Even though he may be a minor figure as compared with Ashida and Saito, he is a master teacher too, I believe. Besides, he was a very close friend of mine.

He was one of the best disciples of Mr. Saito and he left with us his personal accounts of what and how he learned the essence of teaching from his master teacher Saito.

To give just a glimpse of the development Takeda had had made in his life as a teacher, let me give a few of his understandings of the essential roles of teachers.

When he was young, at his early twenties, Takeda was very eager, serious and hard working teacher. He was always with his children, play with his children, sung songs with his children, issued the classroom newspapers to be distributed among children and parents. He believed himself to be at least a good teacher, if not an excellent teacher. However, soon after he had moved ,out of his own wish, to the school where Mr. Saito was the principal then, he had to realize, sooner or later, that the children in his class were not so well educated as those in the more experienced teachers. Later, he found that the most experienced teachers were studying hard, reading for almost hundreds times, even the textbooks of the first graders. He asked the seniors why it was necessary for them to study so hard the easy textbooks designed for the first graders. Their answer was, to his surprise, that it is not because the text was difficult for the seniors themselves but because it was so difficult to find out the difficult points for children, which would possibly be left unnoticed from the viewpoint of the children in their classes and yet would need to be taught to enrich children's interpretations. In other words, the

seniors were reading so many times only to find the possible difficulties from the perspectives of each child in his own class. Every child would have different difficulties and would need be taught in different ways adequate to the difficulties. These seniors were working hard to carry themselves into the perspectives of respective child in their classes.

Let me quote another episode. After teaching for a while a class which had been taught by a respectable senior, he began to realize an important lesson there. That is, being always so diligent and so kind to his children, as if he is "an waiter of a hotel", said he, he himself had been actually spoiling his children. He wrote, "A strange idea occurred to me. The teacher may remain lazy. More than that. He must become lazy. . . . I was unable to give up the will to grow into a lazy teacher, however hard I tried to deny and negate the idea. Not to teach is the teaching. To spare and spare as much as possible to the extreme what the teacher wish to teach, that is the teaching, I thought. The more the teacher spare, the nearer the children would approach the teacher with all their own wills and acts. In this encounter, the genuine teaching is brought about. To become a lazy teacher is to spare in his own personal responsibility."

A book cannot be summarized within a few paragraphs, but a series of many more insightful ideas having been discovered along his personal development are vividly described in his book. Japanese teachers seem to be able to learn more vividly from the concrete and detailed description of the development of a teacher like Takeda than from a systematic and theoretical presentation of how teaching should be. I have just attempted to give you a flavor of his works.

8/ What are considered by the master teachers as necessary in preparing for a classroom teaching on a particular teaching material ?

Among the teachers I had been working with, the four kinds of studies on the teaching materials/contents are considered as necessary to be conducted by teachers who are preparing for classroom teaching of the materials.

These four kinds of studies on teaching materials are:

- 1) From the personal perspective of the individual teacher as a person.
 - 2) From the perspective of the teacher as the specialist of the the subject matter.
 - 3) From the perspective of every child in the class being expected to be taught.
 - 4) From the integral perspective of the teacher who is to teach the children.
- The integral perspective takes into consideration all the three preceding

studies.

The objectives and / or the teaching plan of a particular teaching in a class would be decided upon, by considering the following points:

- a. the most detailed knowledge of how the teacher himself/ herself has attained the present state of knowledge, which is obtained from the study 1) above.
- b. the knowledge of the possible state of the highest level of understanding, which is obtained from the study 2) above, as a specialist in math, science, and/or social studies, for instance.
- c. the knowledge of the present state of children's knowledge and the capacity of understanding on the subject matter, which is obtained from the study 3) above. Here, the flexibility of perspectives on the part of teacher plays an important part, along with intuitive sense of how children would see/ feel/ think about the particular teaching materials.
- d. the knowledge of the preceding experiences of the teachers who have attempted to teach the materials so far.
- e. the various knowledge of teaching methods, psychology, history of the sciences and so on.

Let us suppose for a moment that a Philippine teacher is now going to teach on Japan. What will he be expected to do, if he is willing to follow the path suggested by the Japanese ideas presented above? The following suggestions can be made.

First, the teacher would recall as much in detail as possible his own personal experiences of and/or about Japan. For instance, his first contact with the word "Japan" and the impressions he got at that time. The way his parents told or talked about Japan, when he was a child. How he learned about Japan in his elementary school, in his secondary school, in college and/or in newspapers. His first encounter with a Japanese, whether good or bad. And so forth.

Second, the teacher would imagine, as much as and as varied as possible, how and what children know of and/or about Japan. This could be done by directly asking children questions about Japan, or by recalling what children were talking casually about Japan, and so forth.

Third, the teacher would study, as much as and as deeply as possible, about Japan, as a professional teacher, and perhaps, as a specialist on social studies or Japan studies, for instance. Here, the history, geography, cultural anthropology and the study on Japanese arts and so on, would be included in his study.

Fourth, the teacher now would attempt to clarify what he would like

to teach children, taking into consideration what is necessary and desirable for the children in his class, at the present stage and state of affairs, to learn and know about Japan. In other words, he would consider what kind of new worlds would he like to see the present lived worlds of children turn into. Here, the experiences of teaching practices work most powerful. A novice teacher may wish too much or too little, being unable to consider the necessary and sufficient, desirable and possible way of learning and knowing for the children. A master teacher would plan as much and deep as possible, but not so much as to discourage children by failing them or to make children disinterested by being overfed.

Many records of teaching experiences of this sort are helping Japanese teachers very much, when they plan their own teachings. However, teachers are expected to learn from others but not just to imitate others blindly, even master teachers.

9/ How are Japanese teachers studying teaching for improving their own teaching ?

Perhaps, just the same way as Philippine teachers, a young Japanese teacher would learn from many sources in his attempts to improve his own teaching.

He would learn from: 1) as mentioned above, master teachers of his choice, such as Ashida and/or Saito. I might add the name of Ms. Hama Ohmura 大村はま, a female master teacher on the secondary school level who is retired but still active now in Japan.

2) experienced seniors and predecessors, even if and when they are not master teachers and yet more experienced than he himself.

3) his colleagues, also even from novice teachers younger than himself. This is because any teacher can offer different perspectives on teaching and children, since each teacher is experiencing teaching and children, and thus the teacher himself, differently. Different views from varied perspectives can enrich his world.

4) children in his class. Masters say, "A teacher should learn from children". How to teach is discovered by looking carefully at how children learn. In that sense, a teacher can learn from children how to teach. Besides, sometimes, when a teacher is at a loss how to teach a child, another child who have just finished learning the material in question could teach the former in an admirably skilled and clever way. In this sense also, a teacher can learn from children how to teach.

The last but not the least important is the fact that a teacher could learn from 5) arts and sciences. A teacher could learn arts and

sciences as completed enterprises and as finished knowledge to be adored and to be memorized just as given. However, if he learns arts and sciences as something in the making in the lives of artists and scientists, then he could learn how to teach children arts and sciences in the ways they are formed and created. This is the way some Japanese teachers view arts and sciences.

Particularly important and emphasized is the learning from literature/novels, poems, for example tanka and haiku, Japanese forms of short poems. This is because teachers have to be able to see vividly and faithfully what occurs in the lives of children and the teacher himself, in the way novelists such as F. Dostoevsky and Soseki Natsume 夏目漱石 would see it. The importance of learning from literature is not limited to Japanese/literature teachers, but, it is emphasized, is applicable also to teachers of every subject matter, including, for example, math, science, social studies, even music, athletics and arts or else. This is because a teacher, whatever his specialized subject matter may be, must be able to "see and look" life, which was emphasized as the essentials of teaching by the Master teacher Kihaku Saito mentioned above.

"Everything in the universe is your teacher and everybody else is your teacher too" is the spirit the best part of Japanese teacher tradition cherishes. I would believe in the spirit and would like to be able to act accordingly.

10/ What are the kind of researches on teaching which I perceive as needed in Japan for better teaching and which I would propose for Japanese practicing teachers to initiate?

To end my presentation today, please allow me to describe the kind of researches among teachers on teaching that I perceive as extremely needed now in Japan. In order to avoid misunderstanding, I must emphasize that this is my personal view and is not a generally accepted view in Japan. Therefore, please accept the following presentation just as my own personal opinion, but not as a representative Japanese view. Let me make it short, accordingly.

I would perceive the reason of existence for the researches on teaching as assisting practicing teachers improve their own teaching for the happiness of children. I do not subscribe either to the idea of knowledge for knowledge's sake or to that of scientific research for scientific research's sake. The results of researches must be effective for improving, or at least suggesting improvements for, the teaching practices of teachers who learns and know the results. Unfortunately, this is not the case with many researches, psychological or educational, on teaching in Japan.

Taking into consideration how Japanese teachers so far have improved

their own teaching by learning from master teachers and others, as described above, I would consider the following kind of research as necessary and fruitful.

First, teachers describe their own teaching experiences, whether successes or failures, as faithfully in details as possible, perhaps in literary forms, as if written by a would-be novelist. Such descriptive records are useful for other teachers to share the experiences. Also, the description may include those of your children's experiences as perceived or inferred. The description may also include the observation of other teacher's teaching and children's learning, as observed by the describer. The describer himself, or someone else who is interested in the description, would attempt to explicate the meanings of the experiences given in the description. The explication is the process of making explicit the implicit meanings hidden in the description of the experiences. Teachers share the explicated meanings and the descriptions of teaching experiences among themselves. This process would help teachers get more thoughtful insights into what they are practicing everyday. Everybody would be surprised by and be interested in finding how a deep meaning could be hidden implicit under many tiny little experiences usually unnoticed. Mr. Saito once wrote, "To be modest is to see carefully" . To follow after him, This is the same as to say that teachers and researchers should become modest to see carefully what happen in teaching and learning experiences.

The roles and functions of academic researchers, in this respect, are to facilitate the communication among teachers of teaching experiences and their meanings, by extracting the essences of the descriptive records of teachers' experiences. The essence here are the meanings and the structures of the teaching experiences as a whole. Phenomenology could be the way to such essence.

What is expected is the description of teaching experiences, which, when learned by teachers--- novices or experts---, would help them to improve their own teaching. The improvement would include from the techniques, methods of teaching, the ways of looking at teaching materials, children, teaching and teacher himself, and/or the levels of objectives they consider proper and desirable. Briefly, this is the way I perceive necessary and desirable for researches on teaching be conducted.

Let me stop at this point.

11/ Concluding remarks:

At the end, as a sort of an apology, let me mention my perception of some of the possible meanings of my presentation to the participants today.

I sincerely hope that my presentation will be meaningful to you in some way. It could be meaningful:

- 1) for knowing some portion of Japanese people, i.e. those teachers who are seriously and eagerly working for better teaching and for becoming better teachers.
- 2) for knowing the Japanese society and culture, through familiarizing yourself a little with the society and culture among your Japanese counterparts, i.e. school teachers.
- 3) for knowing at least a kind of possible approach to improve your own teaching.

Of course, perhaps, this is not the only way to improve teaching practices. Even in Japan, not every teacher is learning from Ashida or Saito. There are many similar master teachers, too. Also, there are many teachers who favor the so-called "scientific" academic research approaches on teaching more than the approach of learning from master teachers.

I hope my presentation has shaken you a little and might elicit some echoes from your true hearts, as Ashida might have said. May I request your echoes from your own lived worlds ?

Thank you very much for your listening.

Let me cite a tanka poem by Saito.

In Japanese, 「未来そのものが目の前にあるのだと この子らをみていう人のあり」
The poem could be translated into English something like "'Standing in front of you is the future itself.' So said someone looking at the children."

Bibliography:

Japanese reference may have no use to most of you, but in case someone reads Japanese, let me give some titles which could be of use.

- 1/ 芦田恵之助著「静坐と教育」同志同行社 1937年
- 2/ 斎藤喜博著「教育学のすすめ」筑摩書房 1969年
- 3/ 武田常夫著「真の授業者をめざして」国土社 1990年