

University of Tokyo
Junior Division, Faculty of Arts and Sciences



Promoting Learning -The Finnish Way:
Thematic course: Global Praxis
2018 Academic Year S Semester
Course Report

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Students' reflections included in this report were written by non-native speakers of English and did not go through language editing. However, I hope their texts are clear enough and interesting for readers.



Promoting Learning –The Finnish Way

9-19 SEPTEMBER (IN FINLAND) & 6, 7, & 20 SEPTEMBER (IN JAPAN)

Yusuke SAKURAI, PhD.

Course Leader, Project Lecturer, Center for International Exchange

Finnish education has been enjoying international attention for its high rating in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Finnish educational institutions, including primary, secondary, and tertiary level schools get a number of visitors who are curious about the miracle of Finland's educational achievements. Even when I was studying as a doctoral student at the University of Helsinki, I saw many international students who were craving to learn new, innovative ideas and perspectives about education which would be useful in the educational sectors of their own countries.

I hope this course gave UTokyo students an opportunity to immerse themselves in the Finnish educational experience and to see how the local people's thoughts, culture, and values are reflected in different levels of their educational system. I wished to include both lectures and school visits into this course so that the students could go back and forth between theoretical understanding and authentic experiences at Finnish schools.

In this regard, the support from Learning Scoop was indispensable to the success of the course. Learning Scoop is an organisation consisting of experienced experts in Finnish education, who worked as teachers, principals or teacher trainers. This program has successfully provided further education to Finnish teachers for over 20 years. The Learning Scoop staff have years of experience gained working with the Finnish educational community, from the national level, where they have helped form educational policies, to the individual school level, where they have helped schools work through unique challenges.

In developing this course, I also paid utmost attention to creating situations where the UTokyo participants could have international, interactive experiences with local students and encounter other university students who are living in different parts of world in the same globalising era. Visiting local schools is not a difficult task to organise (if you have some money). I believe that this intensive experience made the course more unique and valuable than it would have been with just a simple school visit. Learning Scoop put an enormous effort into organising a group of support staff and university students, including international students who were studying at Finnish Universities. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Learning Scoop, and at the same time, I would like to thank all the students who participated in this course. Together we had a fantastic experience for 10 days in Tampere, Finland.



Helsinki University Library

Course information

Basic Information

- Course title: Promoting learning–The Finnish way
- Duration: 6-7 September: Pre-departure workshop
9–19 September: Trip to Finland
20 September: Post-course workshop

Program overview

This course aims at developing students' world view and understanding of global issues. Our particular focus is on the various issues of Finnish Education. Students will visit Finland for about 10 days and participate in various learning opportunities such as seminars, school visits, and intensive discussions with local students. Students will not only learn through a series of seminars and school visits, but also proactively provide relevant topics relating to their interests to local professors and students to deepen their understanding of the issues in education. After the trip, they will summarise what they have learned during their stay in Finland in a report written from the perspectives of for example knowledge, attitude and skills. The course is undertaken in English, and accordingly, offers opportunities



At Dream Hostel

for students to develop their academic English skills.

Course requirements

The students are required to complete the following tasks:

- Pre-departure research task (Presentation preparation)
- 10-minute presentation: "What fascinates me about Finnish education"
- Online journal logs (more than 200 words x 3 logs + reading: read one entry x 3 students).
- Course reflection & report (1000 – 1500 words)

Accommodation

- Dream Hostel & Hotel, Tampere (9/9-15)
Address: Åkerlundinkatu 2, 33100 Tampere
Phone: +358 45 2360517
Email: info@dreamhostel.fi
Website: www.dreamhostel.fi
- Hotel Arthur Helsinki, Helsinki (9/15-18)
Address: Vuorikatu 19, 00100 Helsinki Phone
+358-9-173 441
Email: reception@hotelarthur.fi Website:
www.hotelarthur.fi

People

UTokyo Leaders



Yusuke SAKURAI, PhD.

GLOBALIZATION OFFICE,
FACULTY OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES, THE UNIVERSITY
OF TOKYO. PROJECT

LECTURER

Yusuke Sakurai received his PhD in Higher Education from the University of Helsinki,

Finland. His research interests focus on assessment and measurement of students' learning, as well as teaching & learning in higher education. He has worked in Thailand, Australia, Malaysia, Egypt, Finland, and Japan.



Erika ATARASHI, Teaching Assistant

TEACHING ASSISTANT
D1 Graduate School of Education

Course participants

Name	Year / Stream
Daiki Kiyooka	2 / HS III
Yuya Sugiyama	2 / HS II
Hiroto Iwaki	2 / NS III
Yuki Nozawa	2 / NS III
Saki Okamura	1 / HS III
Kana Yokoyama	2 / HS III
Nozomi Echigo	2 / HS III
Yuka Sasahara	1 / HS III
Naho Tomiki	2 / NS I
Yu Amada	3 / Faculty of Education

Day to Day Schedule

September 9 Sun:

Departure & arrival

- Transfer by train from Helsinki-Vantaa Airport to Tampere
- Accommodation check-in, settling down
- Orientation and getting to know Finnish Society and Culture

September 10 Mon:

Introduction to the program and Finnish Education System

- Finnish Education system and training routes from Pre-School to Higher Education

- Principles behind Finnish Education system (Trust and responsibility, Equality and equity, highly educated teaching personnel, Practices based on scientific research, Importance of physical activity)
- Presentations by UTokyo students: What fascinates me about Finnish Education (2 x 10 mins: Yuki Nozawa & Hiroto Iwaki)
- Lunch
- Paradoxes of Finnish Education: Less is More, no dead ends etc.
- Afternoon coffee
- Teacher's role and tasks and teacher autonomy
- School visit, Basic education, grades 1-6th
- Q&A session at school
- STUDY JOURNAL ENTRY (1)

September 11 Tue: Curriculum and assessment in the Finnish Basic Education

- Presentations by UTokyo students: What fascinates me about Finnish Education (2 x 10 mins: Yuka Sasahara & Naho Tomiki)
- Curriculum as a basis for education
- National core curriculum vs. local curricula
- Curriculum Reform: New National Core Curriculum – from What to How
- Curriculum and teaching materials
- Coffee
- Assessment in the Finnish Basic Education: continuous assessment, but no national tests



Pre-departure orientation

- The role of academic and practical subjects in basic education
- Lunch
- Get-together and sports activities with Finnish students including snacks and refreshments.

September 12 Wed: Early Childhood

Education and Care in Finland

- Presentations by UTokyo students: What fascinates me about Finnish Education (2 x 10 mins: Nozomi Echigo & Yuya Sugiyama)
- Care, education and teaching to support children's balanced growth, development and learning
- Educare model: integrated approach to care, education and teaching
- Curriculum Reform: New National Core Curriculum for ECEC in Finland
- Coffee
- Different forms of day-care and early childhood education in Finland
- The funding and fees for day care
- Pre-primary education as a link between early childhood education and school
- Lunch
- Visit to kindergarten
- Q&A session at kindergarten
- STUDY JOURNAL ENTRY (2)

September 13 Thur: Teacher Education and University Studies in Finland

- Presentations by UTokyo students: What fascinates me about Finnish Education (2 x 10 mins: Yu Amada & Kana Yokoyama)
- Introduction to Teacher Education in Finland
- Coffee
- Finnish model for teacher training, in-service-training and further training
- University student's learning in Finland
- Lunch
- Visit: University of Tampere, Teacher Education Department
- Q&A session at the University



Lunchtime

September 14 Fri: Methods for improving Learning

- Presentations: What fascinates me about Finnish Education (2 x 10 mins: Daiki Kiyooka & Saki Okamura)
- Activating teaching methods workshop
- Hands-on experiences about modern teaching methods frequently used in Finnish schools
- New ideas about teaching and learning based on Finnish teaching excellence
- Farewell lunch
- Afternoon coffee
- Reflection and evaluation of the program
- Learning outcomes of the course (given as pre-assignment)
- STUDY JOURNAL ENTRY (3 * READING)

September 15th Sat

- Accommodation check-out
- Transfer by train from Tampere to Helsinki
- Accommodation check-in, settling down

September 16th Sun

- Free time

September 17th Mon:

University Pedagogy

- Seminar at the University of Helsinki
- Topic: higher education
- Dr Anna Parpala & Dr. Telle Hailikari
- STUDY JOURNAL ENTRY (4)

September 18th Tue:

- Departure
- Departure flight from Helsinki-Vantaa Airport
- Departure (AY073) 17:15 September

September 19th Wed

- Arrival in Japan 8:50

September 20th Thur

- Reporting day
- Creating a report

Students' perception of learning outcomes



Students received certificates

DAIKI KIYOOKA

KNOWLEDGE

Differences between Japanese education and Finnish education

Finnish education puts emphasis on equity and tries to educate students so that the variation between individual students and between schools are little. Therefore, it makes students cooperate with each other and encourages fast learners to teach slow learners, while Japanese education makes students compete with each

other. One of the reasons for the difference is the population of each country. In Finland, there are only 5 million people, so each citizen is a very important part of the country and it is more logical to equally take care of all students rather than to take special care of few talented students. In Japan, there are more than 120 million people. As a result, if the country focuses only on brilliant students and does not take care of students who are not good at studying, the country can work well. Through competition, brilliant students can stimulate each other and have confidence. Furthermore, if they succeed in entering a "good" school, they can do more advanced study.

Both educational systems have good points and bad points. Finnish education is good for slow learners, but it lacks, as Ms. Johanna said, effective methods of satisfying talented students. On the other hand, the reverse is true of Japanese education. I think it is better to combine Japanese educational methods with Finnish ones rather than just to imitate Finnish education.

Education as Science

Finnish people think of education as a kind of sciences. For example, it is scientifically proved that students' concentration does not last more than 20 minutes, even though they are taking an exciting class or they are very talented and motivated. So, physical activities such as jumping ten times are included into math class, English class and so on. Furthermore, students are allowed to use a gym ball instead of a chair if they want during a class. This helps some students including ADHD students to concentrate on their studying. In fact, there was a student who were sitting on a gym ball in primary school I visited today. Curricula of early childhood education are also scientifically decided. As Professor Sakurai explained in pre-departure classes, ECEC, which stands for Early Childhood Education and Care, puts emphasis on play rather than academic skills such as numerical reading literacy. The reason for this is that many children at that age have not developed enough to learn academic subjects. If they do it there will be a risk of having difficulty in learning after they enter a primary school. It may be difficult to introduce these scientific methods into Japan. I think many Japanese people still cling to traditional customs and think such methods look stupid even if they are scientifically logical. This is related to what Mr. Sakurai said in the post-course seminar; a librarian told him that he

should not put his feet on a chair, even though he can concentrate on his study more in such a way.

Finnish Kindergarten Education

On September 12th in the morning, we visited a Finnish kindergarten. What impressed me is that teachers there use a kind of sign language in order to communicate with children such as immigrants who have difficulties in understanding the Finnish language. They also make use of some sort of picture cards which illustrate activities there. This helps students to understand what is going on around them. What is more, there is a tag system. Teachers register what their students are doing by using a tag and a smartphone and they send the information to parents. Parents can see what is going on in the kindergarten in real time thanks to the system.

Sharing Teaching Methods

Ms. Johanna said many countries did not teach what the teaching methods was about, but Finland do it. Finnish teachers use Lesson App, a smartphone application. By using this, they can see how to plan lessons and share their lesson plan with other teachers around the country. There are other ways to share teaching



Gym balls in a classroom



Discussion with exchange students

methods. Finnish teachers often do it during lunch break or using Facebook.

Teacher as a Highly Regarded Profession

In Finland there are no textbook inspections and national textbook inspections. So, teachers can flexibly decide what to teach and how to teach. In addition, there is no diploma renewal. The reason for these is that teachers are trusted. It is very difficult to pass entrance exams of the faculty of education because many people want to become a teacher. After entering a university, you have to complete a master's degree in order to get a teacher's diploma. As a result, only these who are talented and motivated can become a teacher. That is why teachers are trusted. The same thing is true of Japanese lawyers and doctors, but not teachers. I think that if working as a teacher become a more highly esteemed career in Japan, this profession will become more popular and more and more talented and motivated students will want to become a teacher.

SKILLS AND ATTITUDE

Critical Thinking

What impressed me during this course is Mr. Sakurai's critical thinking skills. When he listens

to others' presentation, he cares not only about the contents of it but also about its references. Furthermore, he asked a lot of critical questions. For example, he asked me after my presentation why we have to take in play in classes even though students can learn how to communicate or cooperate with each other through academic classes. I have not had a clear answer to this question yet, so I will continue to think about it. Working as a researcher is one of my career choices, so I thought I should also acquire critical thinking skills.

English

For me this was the first time to talk with other people in English and I am glad that I could make myself understood better than I had expected. However, other international students were much better at communicating in English, even though English was not their mother tongue. Therefore, I am now very motivated to practice English.

YUYA SUGIYAMA

KNOWLEDGE

The common concepts in Finnish education

First of all, as for general Finnish education, I found that there are consistent efforts to achieve goals in common from ECEC to university learning. The key-words are 'equality' and 'student-centered'.

The first key-word 'equality' is highly respected in Finnish education. There are conscious efforts to provide equal education to all the students regardless of gender, nationality, language and so on. Even in ECEC, Finnish kindergarten, I saw that teachers made use of sign language for removing language

barrier. Secondly, tuition is totally free from basic education to university education. Moreover, all Finnish teachers can provide equal and high-quality education because they are highly educated than ordinaries. That is why there is no school-shopping throughout the country. The words in the lecture 'Finnish people think nearest school is the best choice' really struck me.

Obviously, Japanese education is based on high competition and there is a large gap between countryside and a big city. In a big city like Tokyo, there are much more school-shopping compared with countryside. I don't think competition is wrong, it often makes students highly motivated and promotes their learning.

On the other hand, I think the difference between the environment throughout the country is a huge problem. It is necessary to provide equal education environment and information to all the students, or they are determined their own lives depending on birth-place to a certain extent. But are there some effective solutions? Is it possible to increase the number of highly educated teachers like Finnish way and provide equal and high-quality education? The answer is 'No', of course. These days, teacher problem is often picked up by media. The work environment is bad and they get low income. Moreover, they are not highly respected in society and some parents often complain about everything to them. Few people want to become teacher in such a severe environment. So far, there are some campaign to overcome these situations, for example, reducing club activity time and relieve teachers' burden. However, it is not enough obviously. In this way, it's impossible to provide highly educated teacher to every schools. However, we can adopt a Finnish method against this problem. In Finland, teachers can share their



Gathered at a café

classes online and they can easily search what they want to see. By doing this in whole-country level, we relieve information gap to a certain extent.

Attractive and unique teaching methods

In Finnish education system, there are some attractive and unique methods. As I said, there is what is called 'Lesson App' and teachers can share their own idea with others, so they can easily improve their teaching ways by introducing various teaching methods. We have difficulties in introducing teaching sharing into Japan. This is because we have not only public schools but also private one and the school curriculum is different between them. However, taking these difficulties into consideration, it is still efficient to share teaching methods



One tool for refresh

between teachers. Just sharing teaching ways leads to inspiration and benefits for education in Japan.

In ECEC, there is unique playing activities as a part of learning. In Finland, playing is much emphasized in childhood to achieve child's secured growth and development. Day care centres have not only their stimulating play-environment but also ample nature around them. Therefore, children often get out of them and explore. Through these activities they can learn various skills such as imaginative capability, communication skill and so on.

Also, there is self-assessment system in basic education: students can assess themselves. The meaning of self-assessment is that students can think about and set up their own educational goals by themselves.

Finnish basic education also makes use of physical activity in class. To exercise in class is important to improve students' welfare and concentration. And this is a part of 'child-centred' education which is an important concept in Finnish education. I think we can easily put into practice these in Japanese classes. Adding to this, Finnish basic schools have longer break than Japan. This is a part of 'child-centred' education.

Moreover, to my surprise, Finnish high school students have opportunities to take part

in university course. In Japan, high school students often decide their majoring without knowing what it is real like and some of them will be bored with their learning in university. Their participations in advance are efficient to find what they want to learn in university and lead to students' motivation to learning. However, Finnish high school students don't always participate in university course. High schools freely choose whether or not they accept these activities, so there is a gap between students if they can take advantage of the system.

What I learned through activities in Finland

I'm sure that all the activities in Finland were stimulating and meaningful. Through activities in Finland, I could find a lot of new perspective for learning. Due to lectures in university Tampere, I could know much information about Finnish education and combine it with what I have already known. Moreover, by visiting some schools in practice, we knew what they are like.

The most impressive memory for me is the third lecture in Tampere. The teacher said 'First of all, Finnish way is aimed at setting up students' goals because dead knowledge has no meanings. That means learning itself is not a goal but a tool to achieve a goal, so students can't find out the meaning of learning if they don't set up their own goals first. Most Japanese students tend to learn passively and they can't find the meaning of learning because they never come up with the goals of learning. On the other hand, one of Finnish educational concepts is 'less is more': Teach less and learn more. Finnish students are not forced to learn and they can find their own meaning to learn. I found the most important thing in my university study is 'setting up the goals first' in order to make my learning meaningful.



Heading for Tampere

Speaking of lecture in Helsinki, we could reconsider our motivation to attend university course. This was also meaningful to improve my learning in university.

SKILLS AND ATTITUDE

English skills and Presentation skills

During the S-semester course in Komaba, we spoke only English and had a lot of English presentation. In Finland, all the members made English presentations in public and we spoke English only until 5 pm and interacted with foreign people. I haven't experienced English speaking, so it was really tough for me, but I could improve my English skills and presentation skills to a certain extent. English skills and presentation skills are necessary not only for university study but also for my life, so I can take advantage of this course.

Communication skills with foreign people

In Finland, I had a lot of time to talk with foreign people and It is the first time to talk with specific foreign people. At first, I was really nervous and couldn't communicate with them well but I came to do well as the course was going on. All of them were very kind and gave me a lot of new perspective. It is also beneficial to gain new perspectives from foreign people



At Pyynikki observation tower

for my life. In University of Tokyo, there are a number of foreign students and I probably have many opportunities to talk with them. Owing to this experience, I feel that I can easily communicate with them. It is worthwhile in my study that I can get new knowledge and perspective by communicating with foreign people.

IN CONCLUSION

In Finland, I could learn a lot of new perspective through lectures and visiting schools. Then, I could combine the new knowledge with what I had already known. And I could find the most important thing for me to study in university through lectures, 'goal-oriented' learning. Moreover, I could improve English, presentation and communication skill through this course, this is beneficial for university study and learning.

HIROTO IWAKI

Through the course, I was always thought about the two differences. The first one was the difference between the Finnish education and the Japanese education. On the first day, Johanna told us that the education in Finland focuses not only on "equality", but also on "equity". In this context, equality means the same opportunity or chance to study and equity means the same quality of result that students achieved after they studied. In modern Finland, they give much weight on the "equity", and as a result, they could make up the society with little disparity. I could see it in their ability of English language. Wherever I went, for example in kindergarten, university, or even hamburger shops, everyone could communicate very well in English even though English is not the official language in Finland. They said that that is because they can't use

Finnish in any other country in the world, but it is also the case in Japan. However, we can't use English as a communication tool as well as Finnish people. Considering this fact, our Japanese can learn a lot from the earnest teaching of foreign languages in Finland.

Also, in Finland, the results of scientific researches are effectively adopted in their school education. For example, they let their children play and learn through the playing in the kindergartens. This is according to the result of the research that children who were made to study in the early childhood could achieve poor grade after they grew.

There are many virtues in Finnish education other than these, but I don't think all the system is well functioned. For example, as I wrote before, they put much weight on equity, but I think that is too much. As a result of the policy, they cannot nourish the talent of gifted students more effectively, for the better grades of gifted students mean the larger gap between smart students and other students.

Also, I was shocked in the primary school, because children had too much freedom. Some children sat on the chair in a very bad manner, while some children talked with other classmates during the class, and teachers don't scold them for these behaviours. In Japan, these manners are strictly demanded, and teachers



Lecture about university learning



Experiencing physical activity

put much effort to tell children the importance of the manner. I thank my teachers in elementary school for that point because I could become to know how to behave in the social context by these training.

During the staying in Finland, I found out that these differences between Japan and Finland arises from the difference of the object of education between the two countries and of their population. In Finland, they think that what they learn at school should be related to their real life. Also, teachers let their students seek what they really want to be and guide them individually. That is possible because teachers are trusted by parents and there are not so much population in Finland.

In Japan, the factor of competition is inevitable. Since we were in a primary school, we have been assessed by the same test and same standard and we compete to get better grade in the group. In a sense, we try to expand the disparity. And after all, to most people except those who want to be a researcher or a scientist, what we learn is not related to a real life, and they use it as a tool to gain better status in the society. Partly that is because, there are too many students and we can't assess them by their individual standard.

I can't say which is better because both of these education systems are formed according to their cultural context or the agreement of the people in the nation. It can also be said that since the purpose of education is different, the means to realize that is also different. However, what I think Japanese should learn from Finnish is the positive stance to the educational reformation.

In Finland, the discussion for educational system is so actively held that the policy for educational system can be one of the main points of the election. They don't be afraid to change and don't stick to the old system, and seek the better way for the future children.

By this direction for the "future", we will be able to progress greatly.

Now apart from what I learned or thought about education during the course, I want to write about myself. During this course, I can't say I had enough communication with others in English. Of course, I tried to do so at first, but as the day passed, I got more tired and cared less of others. That is partly because of my character. I usually avoid talking with those who are not familiar with me in my daily lives especially in the case that there are many people. I can't keep up with others' tension and then give up after all. I knew I need some time to be alone to restore, but I couldn't take that time during the course. I understand that this character will be an obstacle near future, so one of my goals was to improve that, which wasn't achieved.

Though I couldn't communicate much, but I found that the quality of communication was not so bad. In most of the case, I could make myself understood to others, and as the day goes, I felt that I could speak English more fluently. The presentation was not so bad, too, so I could get confident for my ability to utilize English as a communication tool.

Another outcome is the similar to the conclusion in the topic of education. During this course, while I discuss with other Japanese members, I felt that they have some clear vision for their future and they try hard to realize that. They told me the vision very positively, and I thought that this is what is lack inside myself. Since I enter the university, I got lost in my thoughts, and I was afraid of introducing myself, for I didn't know what I should be in the future. After all, I stuck to my past. I should look for my future more positively.

At last, I want to thank all the people involved in this course. This course made me think a lot, and I think I could find something important in it, Thank you all very much.

YUKI NOZAWA

INTRODUCTION

Through the program of going to Finland, I learned so many things which is very meaningful to me. Of course, some of them are whole about Finnish Education, but the other things which contribute to other subjects are much more. In this paper, I wrote about what I learned about knowledge, attitude, and my skills.

KNOWLEDGE

My knowledge was very broadened by the course "Learning Scoop," which was held in University of Tampere (UTA). I cannot even write them all out here, but I share some of them that was very impressive to me.

Physical Activities

In every classes, teachers always give students physical activities. As some of the survey shows, introducing physical activities promotes children's concentration, and improves their



Handmaking teaching materials

academic achievement (Syväoja et al. 2013). For instance, Johanna, a trainer of this course, let us do some exercises to keep our concentration. That was really fun to me, and I could really feel that I was concentrating on. Some teachers also let us do so in Japan, but I was surprised that every teacher let children do. Furthermore, children have long long recess time. Some younger children were even forced to go out and have physical activities, if it was not raining then. Children seemed to be so comfortable for this. As a result of these ideas, no one in the class I visited seemed that they were just boring and ignoring. How amazing it is! It is often the case that Japanese children ignore teachers and fall asleep while the class. This can be one way to keep children studying in Japan too.

This idea was introduced in Finland because the scientific survey showed it is effective. In Finland, all of the ideas which was introduced into pedagogy area is all based on scientific research. I believe Japanese pedagogy authorities also read those articles, but I don't feel that they are eager to introduce them. I may not say that you must introduce all, but if they respect Finnish "research-based education" style, this will be great for Japan.

Trust and Responsibility

As most of all teachers I met said, Finnish parents seldom complain about their children's school. Because of historical reasons and also their equally high level of skills, teachers are regarded as an authoritative job. Children always trust teachers in any way. Even when children complain about their teachers, parents never say ill of teachers. It was very surprising to hear that parents don't trust their children than teachers. This "trust" improves teachers to introduce new methods. Parents totally agree with teachers.

Teachers also trust children. In a craft class, children could make something that they wanted, and use any tools that were in the class. What was surprising was that their teachers didn't supervised so much because they trusted children, and also children understood about risks of using tools. Teachers taught children risks not by forcing not to do so, but let them think of those risks. Children are allowed to commit mistakes, and teachers are responsible for any of their mistakes. Fortunately, this "trust children & take responsibility" way succeeds so well. That's how it works. But why? One of my thought is that it enhances their active learning, which is the best way to promote children to learn from the bottom of their heart, in a very natural way. Because it's natural, children become more eager to do more. Then their trust improves. "Trust and responsibility" lead to active learning, and active learning improves "trust and responsibility." This is one of the biggest success in Finland education.

Nowadays, many Japanese political education-leaders are trying to introduce active learning so that children can enhance their active thinking, but still it doesn't work well. To enhance our Japanese education, we should respect "trust and responsibility." It is parents, children, and teacher's duty to trust each other.

Principals and political leaders also have to trust them. So, my new question is, "how is it possible to make a society which everyone trusts each other?" It'll take a long time to get an answer for it.

Purpose for Learning -Motivation-

What I was searching the most at the first point of this course was that how motivation is driven. The answer was given more than I expected.

On the last day in UTA, while sharing what is the most important thing for education, one of our members, Yu Amada mentioned "enjoyment is good for learning, but you have to change enjoyment to interest to improve." This critically hit my heart, because I really agreed that it is interest that drives one's motivation and that improves one's learning. As Anne and Telle, professors in University of Helsinki (UH), taught us that there are 5 different types of motivation for learning and that the most effective "deep approach" learning tends to be done by careerist-materialist and personal-intellectual development, those who have deep interests in certain subjects will acquire better in grades. This survey is a result for university students, but it can be also true in basic education to some extent. Even though grades are actually not well-focused in Finnish basic education, it is

teachers' job to give motivations to students, so that they'll start to gain skills to think deeply about topics they are interested in. Many different kinds of methods that is enjoyable to students can be used in the classroom. But you should never forget that the main goal is to motivate students to study driven by "their interests."

In Yuha's lecture, who was one of the professors in the "Learning Scoop" program at UTA, he said that you should learn tools not just for getting it, but for purposes that you found. Giving purposes is what teachers are expected to work on the most. It is often the case that once you get stuck against the wall that is too difficult for you to understand it and go over even if you are driven by interests, but just by interests, you give up. What a waste it is! It's purposes that will drive you very strongly. You should guide your purposes to interests, but also you should not forget your purposes.

And this idea leads to the Finnish original idea that you don't need any competition because academic skills are not for competition, but for problem solution. As a result, there is no national academic paper tests in basic education except for the last year. Negative "pressure" can be one of the ways to let children learn, but Finnish positive "interests and purposes" are the better for children to learn more actively.

ATTITUDE & SKILLS

I was really grateful that I could attend this course, because it improved my skills so much. I'm going to share a little of them.

Critical Thinking

What I most felt meaningful was that I got used to think in critical ways and give questions. It's a Japanese problem and the often the case that students don't ask questions so much because



they think it interrupts classes, but I was really encouraged to do so by seeing foreign students. It's not a quite easy thing to think in a critical way and ask questions, but it must be important in any way to learn something. Critical thinking leads to the better performance because it enhances deep understanding. I don't have to feel ashamed of asking questions. I'll try to do it.

Speaking English

My command of speaking English also improved. It was a good attempt to use only English before 5 p.m., which is the rule we participants made. Once I started speaking English, I got used to think in English, not just translating my Japanese thinking. It enabled me to use English more fluently. I have to try more to use English.

AT LAST

I'm very happy that I could join this course. It was really good opportunity to rethink my learning life. I want to say very very thank you to all of the people that helped me so much through this course, especially to professors in UTA and UH, exchange students in UTA, the participants of this whole course, Mrs. Atarashi, and professor Sakurai who arranged the whole course.



Experiencing various teaching methods

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SAKI OKAMURA

INTRODUCTION

During this 10-days course of Finnish educational interface, I learned a lot about many things. Personally, I have had interest in Finnish education since I was a high school student, so for me, every program in this course was fruitful and exciting. Moreover, in that study trip, there were many tasks which we had to be active to achieve. Thanks to them, I had great opportunities to reflect myself and rethink about "what education is".

This paper will report the topic of what I learned from this course and would like to cherish the best for my future, focusing on the three aspects; knowledge, skill, and attitude.

1. KNOWLEDGE

Through the course, I was able to gain so much knowledge about education in Finland. Among them, this section will focus on the two topics which I especially interested in.

What fascinate me from Finnish schools is that, although they are praised by other countries again and again, Finnish educators are not proud of it at all and still trying to find better way of teaching and learning. Japanese people including me tend to think that, "if something goes well, you should keep it" (Genjo-iji). However, the educators in Finland don't think like that. One of our teachers in this course said, "Now we have chance to change



Tampere University

education, because we don't "have" to change, but we "can" change." She also mentioned, "We think our education has a lot of lacking. It's not enough." I was impressed, and it was this attitude towards education that all the people who engage in Finnish education had. I realized that this an inquiring mind for better education is the key to the success of this country. This is one of the most important knowledge I got.

Moreover, I found the important factor consistent in every educational practice; "collaboration". For instance, in terms of knowledge, teachers "connect" subjects to playing, or even "integrate" a subject into another one, so that children can understand clearly or "combine" each knowledge flexibly. Furthermore, in Finnish school, "collaboration" with others are put an emphasis on. Students often think and solve the problem in pairs or groups, teachers frequently help with each other by teaching the subject they pride in. Above all, the most impressive relationship was that of teachers at day care center. Although there are fewer children than those of Japan and 1 teacher needs to take care of only 4 children, there are full equipment in the center and children play a lot with various tools, as well as once a week they go out and play in nature. Teachers have quite much work to do. However, when I asked one of them if they feel

burdened by these tremendous tasks, she laughed and answered, "Well, it might be too hard for me sometimes, but in that case all our colleagues help me. I can work because the working environment is very good." We have visited some teachers, and all of them kept smiling while talking with us about their jobs. It was the climate of "collaboration" in this country that enable them to work more comfortably.

I would like to say that it is these two factors, positivity and collaboration of educators, that our educational interface lacks, and causes its severe problems such as the shortage of nursery school teachers and the business of school teachers. However, more than anything else, I myself have to cherish them. In order to study at university and after that work as a member of society more effectively, I would like to remember and keep trying to realize what I learned from Finnish way.

2. SKILL

Since I started to take S1 term lessons for getting the chance to visit Finland, I had been terribly worried about my poor English. I could not talk with others in English, let alone asking questions. Everybody in the lesson seemed so far superior to me and I felt shocked every time after that class.

In Finland, at first, I could not speak few words in English. I was still ashamed of not making myself understood. However, a word of Finnish lecturer changed my mind; "There is no native speaker in our class. So, don't be afraid, be active!" At that time, I realized that, although my English was terrible, everyone around me tried listening carefully to me. All of them are smiling, and they did not care at all if there were some mistakes. Stimulated by others, little by little, I learned to express my opinions. I

could also take part in the conversation in English and ask questions to teachers. For me, it was pleasant to share what I thought with people of different national origin.

At the same time, I think I was also able to gain the skill of "listening" to others. Before taking the course, I almost gave up understanding what people said in English, blaming on my poor English. However, in the course, there were many people who I wanted to share ideas but could communicate with me only in English, and I tried to listen and grasp their words as much as possible.

Through the struggling for communication and understanding, I could come by not only the opinion of Finnish teachers but also those of students in Finland, Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic. and Taiwan. Moreover, again and again, I felt the sense of satisfaction when I could express myself in English and smile together. I think these experience and skills would be related to the chance to meet someone "different" from myself. I learned that, even though you have little confidence in speaking out, by not avoiding talking to them but listening and sharing my idea, you will encounter another new and interesting viewpoint. I would like to keep this in my mind.

3. ATTITUDE

As I mentioned above, I talked a lot in English and had a good time with people from other countries, and for the first time in my life, I got the real motivation to learn English. In talking with them, I had many things to express in my mind, but due to my inability to do that, most of them did not come out. Over and over again, I regretted about that. What is more, through the presentation in front of others, I always lost my confidence, and could not answer questions, using the proper English. This firsthand experience in Finland encouraged me



Kindergarten visit

to do more practice of speaking and presentation in English.

Moreover, through the many discussion session in the lesson, I could revise what I know relatively, and noticed how ignorant I was about not only Finnish education but also education in our own country. This course gave us

enough opportunities to talk with exchange students and Finnish teachers about the comparison of education between different countries. I asked them about their schools and contemporary educational situation. However, when it came to my country's affair, I could not answer it with confidence. Before participating in the study trip, I assumed that Finland education is good, and everything in Japanese education was inferior to it, without investigating our educational situation. Not until I discussed in the class did I realized that It was completely false, and sometimes I felt regrettable because I could not explain about what I was asked by exchange students. I gained another important knowledge for my life; Do criticism after knowing well about itself.

CONCLUSION

Up to here, this report describes about what I obtained from this study trip; "Promoting learning -the Finnish way", looking at three subjects of knowledge, skill, and attitude. In

terms of "knowledge", I found the "positivity" and "collaboration" in educational interface. Moreover, I could enhance the skill of "communication in English" a little. Now, I have the willingness to learn English and the awareness of keeping knowing about ourselves.

It may seem that we can easily understand the importance of these topics I mentioned in this essay. However, I think it was extraordinarily valuable to have the chance to notice them through the real experience in overseas. I would like to thank everyone engaging in this course for providing me with this special opportunity.

To sum up, through the whole programs, I was able to acquire so much suggestion which would help me study at the university and live through the modern world. Making use of this experience itself, I would like to contribute, and also give inspiration to education in our country.

KANA YOKOYAMA

Joining this course has been the most impressive thing I have ever had, because experiencing Finnish way of Education has been one of my dreams; when I was a junior high school student, Finnish education has just come under spotlight thanks to PISA results. It was the topic that I chose for my graduation paper. Since I saw this course on the syllabus, I have been looking forward to joining this program. My goal of this Global Praxis was to get to know how Finnish people feel and perceive its education, which we cannot experience if we are not in that country, which has successfully been achieved.

On the first day of the program, the lecturer kindly introduced about Finland. Because education itself is closely connected

with culture, society, economy, and history of its country, it helped a lot when getting into Finnish education. Finnish as minor language and lack of resources aside from forests, were the reasons why Finland puts emphasis on education other than anything. The same thing is true of Japan, which is facing the declining birth-rate, aging society and lacking resources. However, few Japanese truly value education, which makes two countries very different. Also, Finnish education is built upon the culture of equity and trust. Thus, teacher's autonomy is highly respected, and there are few parents who complain about teachers. It is also stressed that teachers always top the ranking of what children want to become in the future and students who want to study pedagogy often perceive it as more important than medicine or law. Thus, talented and motivated youth are working hard to become teachers, which enables the quality of teaching to be kept high. There were a lot of teaching methods that teachers make use of when communicate with children, students, parents, and teacher colleagues. These methods are in general scientifically proved. Just to mention a few, they show kindergarten children a kind of sign language or visual images to make them understood what is going on regardless of cultural background or hearing capabilities. Secondly, there was online system that parents and teachers can check the schedule and a whiteboard that teachers tell parents what children have learned during that day, which make it easy for parents to trust teachers. Also, teachers cooperate with each other. For example, when they are tired or have a bad day, other teachers can be responsible for the class and he or she can have a coffee break for a moment to refresh. They also make the most of Facebook page. This can be used as interaction

between teachers. They find useful methods or even a solution to a problem.

The visit of Finnish comprehensive school and kindergarten was very meaningful to me in a sense that I could feel what is really going on in Finnish education. They also reminded me of them in Germany which my little brother used to go to. The lecturer told me that it is simply because the pedagogy that Finnish people refer to is derived from German educational theorists. In the same way, Finland has collaborated with other culture's teaching methods. Surprisingly, Finnish educational methods and thoughts come mostly from United States, from Hungary, and East Germany. I was happy to be aware of my history of education and Finnish education had some relations, and at the same time, was surprised in that what I believed to be Finish way beforehand turned out that it was originated in other country. My belief in the connection of education with culture, society, economy, and history of its country has been shook from the foundation. However, I was convinced that my belief was not completely mistake, but acceptance of a great variety of preferable educational methods and theories and the way the country adjusts it is what makes its educational system unique. Through history, Finish education has experienced some



Experiencing various teaching methods

reforms. However, Finland never introduces a new policy drastically. To the contrary, in Japan, the new entrance exam will start in 2020. Many young students, including my little brother, are all confused. When we see the Japanese educational policy, it is understandable at first to follow other countries if they outperform. However, at the same time, it is important to realize an appropriate one which fits the country, Japan itself. This way of thinking is what we can learn from Finnish education.

The other thing that I learned through this program is that communicating in English is not as hard as expected. These 11 days has been the period that I used English more than ever. Looking back now, the lecturer at Tampere, Johanna, kindly told us on the first day that broken English is our official language, which encouraged me a lot. Through participating various activities in the lectures or between breaks, I found myself proudly talking with people from other countries in English, which surprises me the most. Having coffee with international students after the closing of the program has also been good memories in this Global Praxis. We talked a lot about ourselves and our countries. By talking with the international students, I could not only familiar with Finnish education but also get some knowledge of their countries' educational system and make some comparison, which has been great experience. Also, lectures and activities really make use of Finish teaching method. Thus, while I learned about Finnish education in the classroom, I could also experience Finnish educational style by myself, which convinced me the power of Finnish way a lot.

In the lecture at the University of Helsinki about university students' attitude and approach toward learning, we had an opportunity to discuss our own motive to



Sign language used in the kindergarten

attend university classes. I know motives are important, but when we are busy in our daily lives, it is easy to forget it. Since we start new semester next week, this was good opportunity for me to rethink about my own motives. My study field, medicine, will be different from education, but experience of this program will have been certainly useful for me. I asked myself many times during this Global Praxis if my way of learning has been fruitful to me. For example, I have long thought that learning only happens when I am in the classroom, which is not the case. I would make the most of what I learned during this period and try hard to practice my life-long learning.

I owe my deepest gratitude to Prof. Sakurai for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I am sure that joining this course has been more meaningful than anything I have ever had. Then, I would particularly like to thank Ms. Atarashi and Ms. Ichihara for helping us. Lastly, my deepest appreciation goes to my friends joining this program from Japan, Finland, and all over the world. They were really nice. I was greatly inspired by them and these friends became my treasure. I hope we will keep in touch forever.

NOZOMI ECHIGO

INTRODUCTION

My interest was on evaluation or criticism to Finnish way in education by people who are around children such as parents and teachers. According to a study "Evaluating the quality of the child care in Finland" (Eeva Hujala, Elina Fonsén & Janniina Elo, 2012) it can be considered very good in demonstrating the overall quality of Finnish child-care services as perceived by parents and teachers. However, it is just an analysis of the statistic, and I could not necessarily know the evaluation or criticism to the Finnish way by listening to some opinion of those people directly. Through this program in Finland I would like to collect more information and opinions, as communicating and talking with many people.

WHAT I ACHIEVED IN THE COURSE IN SOME PERSPECTIVE

Knowledge

As this course going, I got to perceive that Finnish way is highly evaluated by parents and teachers, not only in early child care but also in any other degree in practice. There are some reasons.

First, teachers are trusted by any people like parents, students and administrators. They have autonomy to decide how and what to teach. Some teachers make their own original textbook or material by him-or- herself. Parents respect teacher's decision and have a partnership in sharing information about own child. In my opinion "the closed door" contra to aisles is represented the trust to teachers. In Japanese comprehensive school, sometimes the principal or teachers observe a class through

windows. On the other hand, in Finland, there is no windows and the door kept closed. I think that teachers have a responsibility of all the aspects in a class.

Second, students are provided safe environment to learn in the class to support every child including who have special needs. One example is sign-language in a kinder garden where we visited. It is used to express their weekly or daily schedule, warning or situation like weather according to colour or pictures. It enables to understand easily for children who speak different language. Also, all children have their individual plan prepared in cooperation with their parents.

As these two reasons show, Finnish way is highly evaluated. However Finnish people think that it is not perfect because there are some problems, for example; gap between boys and girls in score of international tests, lack of skills to improve the students who are very talented. Thus, they have searched a better way of education.

Skill

We had an opportunity to make presentation about "What fascinates me about Finnish education". I tried to convey my interests on evaluation clearly to the audience such as



Presentation about "What fascinates me about Finnish education"

teachers and students in Finland. My goal in presentation was to have a confident enough to speak loudly and clearly in public, because I had met a lot of talented students in Tokyo university and lost my confidence. However, through more practice and getting feedback on my presentation, I noticed that it depended on how much I had practiced and learned about the theme. After I experienced that I got lost in my script when practicing my presentation in front of Japanese students, I thought it was not necessary to have it in my hand. That's why I can tell about what I want to say with glimpse at summery or screen even though I don't have script. In terms of having confidence and non-reading I got some skills to make a good presentation through this program.

I also learned to use any resources efficiently and write the citation to make my essay or presentation more academic. I used a graph on evaluation by parents and teachers in my presentation, so it enables the audience to understand easily and consider more about the topic.

Attitude

I thought that I was not good at speaking in English and hesitated to speak it at any places like class or event although I was provided a great opportunity to improve my English. In a class of this program,

there were some students from other countries like Italy, Spain and Taiwan. A Finnish professor said us "Be active to speak English. No native speakers here." It enabled me to talk and communicate with students who had never seen before. What is more, Finnish class and its safe environment are based on the interaction between both student and student, student and teacher. To promote interaction, Finnish teachers often take a time for students to do exciting activities like games or physical

movements. It leads for students to learn and express their own opinion freely in the class because they accept each other through interactional activities. I experienced such safe environment in this program and as a result I could communicate with other students to convey what I want to say, using not-necessarily perfect grammar. I also could have a positive attitude to speak English in a pair or group.

HOW I THINK THE ACHIEVEMENTS WOULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH MY FUTURE

Learning

In this course, I learned that Finnish people had looked for a better way of education although it was highly evaluated so far. In addition, Finnish education is based on its history, culture and context. For instance, Finnish residents pay a lot of taxes to the government compared to Japanese people, and they are provided enough welfare and social services including education.

In Japan, the government or teachers have visited there and want to imitate some good aspects in Finnish way. However, I think it is difficult and Japanese people should consider an appropriate way of education because Japan has its own background. That is my new interest, and I'm going to research on evaluation or criticism of Japanese way, utilizing what I learned in Finland. I want to find an ideal way of education in Japan through my school-life.

English

Through this program, I felt the importance of English again and again in communicating with people all over the world. I could have a positive attitude to speak English and ask a question in a pair or group work, however not in the lecture. That's because I did not have any

vocabulary and listening skills, so I couldn't necessarily understand what teachers said in the lecture. I regretted that I had not studied it hard when being a high school student. As I saw some Japanese students asking a question to teacher in class, I envied them and wanted to communicate internationally with more people who have unique idea or opinion in English. Thus, I'm going to try to practice and improve my English through any other international experience, having a positive attitude that I learned In Finland.

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YUKA SASAHARA

INTRODUCTION

This program provided us the opportunity to stay in Finland and learn about Finnish education. I have learned so much not only about the education system in Finland but also about its culture and their attitude toward education. Above all I have learned, I will write in this essay about what I was particularly interested in; self-assessment as a tool to establish self-esteem in Finnish students and how the educational environment in Finland is made comfortable and safe place for children. I will also write about how I associate these things I have learned with my future university studies.

ANALYSIS OF MY ACHIEVEMENT

Self-assessment: establishing self-esteem



Chatting with Finnish students

Since before taking this course, I have been interested in how Finnish students establish self-esteem. One of the answers I found to this was the self-assessment system, which most of the Finnish students experience in comprehensive schools.

In the lectures in Tampere, they explained how children do self-assessment showing some examples of the assessment sheets where they can check themselves which kind of things they can do, they are good at, or they need more effort to achieve. I learned that this self-assessment system provides the students the opportunity to learn how to properly evaluate themselves, but not to be too critical to themselves. After the self-assessments are done, the students will talk with their teachers, so that the students can fix their assessment with teachers if they evaluated themselves lower than their actual achievements. I think this plays a role in establishing self-esteem in the Finnish children. To talk with teachers and to be told how the teachers think they did is more convincing than just to get papers with higher numbers than they expected. In fact, I myself experienced this when I did my presentation in Tampere. I first thought I did not do good enough because I was nervous and could not achieve the goal of making eye-contacts with the audience, however, Juha, the

lecturer on the day, praised me and said that I made a good presentation with various perspectives and that my English was perfect. He gave me confidence and then I came to think that, although I need more effort on some points, overall it was not so bad that I had to be too critical to myself.

Making comfortable and safe place

One of the most impressive things I have learned was that, in Finland, hardly no one gets no support. Everyone gets some kind of personal support and those who have disorders are not the 'exception'. Even a teacher can get a support instead of punishment when he/she fails. They do not exclude anyone. This is one of those which make the educational environment in Finland a safe place. Also, those who have difficulties are integrated into the mainstream. I think this is good for both those who have difficulties and those who are in the mainstream. Children with difficulties learn what kind of things they can do to survive in the mainstream, so that they will not have as much difficulties in the future when they have to survive in the society. On the other hand, children in the mainstream also learn that everyone has their strength and weaknesses, so they will have the mind 'no one is exception', and they learn to naturally support those who are in need.

Making a classroom comfortable for children is one of the most important pedagogy of Finnish. When it has safe and nice atmosphere, children will be active in interacting with others and learning from one another, and that is what promotes learning. To achieve this, the important thing is that children in the classroom know each other. This is why, on the first day of the program in Tampere, we were asked to introduce ourselves and find things that all members in a group had in

common. I think it worked quite well, but I really understood that 'knowing each other' is essential on the last day of the course in Tampere, because, even without considering the improvement of my English throughout the course, it was so much easier to tell what I think to others than it was on the first day, because we knew each other better.

CONSIDERATION WITH MY FUTURE

UNIVERSITY STUDIES

Consider more about providing educational environment

I wish to make a better society for everyone to live in, and I regard education as a tool to achieve this. So, I have been interested in education, but my particular interest was in the outside-of-school education because I wanted to provide a 'third' place for all children where they feel safe and accepted. School was, in my opinion, a place where teachers teach subjects in curriculum, and I did not see the importance of learning those 'academic' subjects.

However, through this course, I recognised the value of school education. To be exact, I recognised how, even at school, it is possible of promoting learning not only about subjects but also about other skills and attitude children



Group discussion

need in their lives. Still, I think it is the challenge for the Japanese society to provide equal educational environment for all children. Also, I think the pedagogy of making a learning environment a safe place needs to be diffused. So, in the next three years in this university, I would like to consider more about how we could provide equal and safe environment for all children to learn in.

Improve the learning of myself

What I have learned in this course was useful not only for me as a future education provider but also for me as a current learner. I came to think about how I could improve my learning in this university from what I learned.

Self-assessment is always a useful tool. Knowing what I am good at and what I am not helps myself improve. I am not good at managing time and effort, so I always panic before exams worrying that I do not have enough time to prepare. So, that is my current problem that I need effort to solve and I know that my learning will improve so much if I achieve this.

I think making comfortable and safe place is also helpful. In the case we have learned, it was about what teachers can do to provide nice atmosphere between children, but I think I can apply this to the learning environment of myself. To make my learning environment comfortable, I will try to talk with people around me and get to know them as much as possible so that I will be surrounded by people I know.

CONCLUSION

This program was full of new knowledge and fascinating experiences. I am really grateful that I had this opportunity and the best thing was that I got to reconsider the value of school education. I started to think that outside-of-

school education is not the only solution, so the options for my future has been widen. Although I learned so much through this program, I feel that there is even more to learn and investigate than there was for me before, and my interest toward education has been deepened. So, I wish to study more about education in university and find a solution to the issue of making a better society.

NAHO TOMIKI

INTRODUCTION

This global praxis gave me a lot of knowledge and made me rethink of my learning. At first, I imaged that Finnish education was good but I didn't know why. After this program, I have learned that Finnish education is not perfect but the Finnish people are trying their best to improve education. We don't have to imitate everything in their system but still we can learn from Finland.

Upon arrival, I noticed that few things were written in English than I had expected. Since Finnish is quite different from other European languages, it was almost impossible to guess the meanings, which was new experience to me. Thanks to the education system, however, Finnish people speak English very fluently. Children, elderly people and even McDonald's staff can speak English. I was so surprised and I wanted to know the secret.

EDUCATION FOR FUTURE

I think the most important thing in Finnish education system is the aim of the education. They are teaching for lifetime. English education is one example. Since Finnish is spoken in none of other countries, Finnish people should learn English to communicate



Chatting in a class

with people from other countries. They have a practical reason to study English. The aim of education is clear in other fields. Our professor repeatedly said that the client of education is future and making meanings in learning is important. Since we don't know what information will be needed in the future, what we should have is the skill to find, evaluate and utilize information. Therefore, they don't have standardized tests which is for just testing how children memorize contents in their class. They don't teach something as knowledge. Instead, they teach meaning of something to improve children's skill.

The same thing can be said in curriculum. Curriculum should not be what forces teacher to teach certain things, but for teachers to coach children as a tool. Although Finland got high rank in PISA (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.), the new curriculum was designed. We think usually we have to change something when we get low score. On the contrary, when we get high score, we tend to think we don't have to change. Based on the idea, "it can be changed, not have to be changed", they changed their curriculum to improve their education much better in Finland. In addition, the process of renewal of the curriculum involved many people and it took a long time.

When the first draft was designed, it was opened to public as an e-document to collect opinions from different perspectives. In Japan, the renewal of the curriculum was done by authority, though it was based on discussion among educational professionals. I want to put emphasis again that education should be highly valued among citizens, not only by authority.

TRUST ON TEACHERS

What makes possible to do such an education in Finland? The key to this question is Finnish teachers. They are regarded as experts. For example, to enter educational faculty is difficult. The admission rate to class teacher education is approximately 10 per cent (Paronen & Lappi, 2018). Even though they graduate from educational faculty, it is hard to become a teacher. Educational profession is needed in many jobs other than teachers. Of course, teacher training in the faculty of education is enough to become a real teacher. With this background, teachers are respected and trusted from parents and principals. Therefore, there is no reason to have standardized tests or inspections. All teachers have autonomy to organize their classes. They can decide which teaching materials or teaching methods they use.

At the same time, teachers don't have to be perfect. No teachers work alone and they can call for help each other. Teachers share information in various ways like FB group, poster, presentation, and most common way is sharing information with colleagues. I thought teachers were independent when I saw the word autonomy and freedom. In fact, teachers are collaborating each other. This idea was new for me. Team teaching has become more and more popular and it is good for teachers and students too.

LEARNING IN UNIVERSITY

The topic of the last lecture was university education. University education is what I am taking now but I hadn't thought of my learning until I was asked in this lecture. We talked about teaching and learning style. In our university, most of classes focus on contents. Few classes focus on students understanding. So, there are many students who skip the class because they can acquire the knowledge required in the tests without attending classes. However, knowledge will not remain for a long time and we can't learn anything in true meaning by this learning style.

The discussion about the attitude attending the university study was most impressive. It makes me rethink about my learning. Before I entered the university, I didn't think of why I was studying. I took the entrance exam just because everyone around me went to university, and I entered this university just because I happened to pass the exam. Then, I have met many people with various backgrounds who have given me new perspectives. I have got new knowledge and the way of thinking, which I enjoyed very much. So, my current motivation toward study is based on my interest. Thinking of classification, my motivation changed to personal-intellectual development.

MY OWN LEARNING

Through this global praxis, not only I learned about Finnish education but experienced Finnish education. I found that learning actively is the key to learn well. We should learn actively, not passively. In this course, we had a lot of time to discuss with others. We were required to think and share what we think and to learn from others. Also, I learned that to have question is important. We don't have to be afraid of making mistakes. It was impressive

that the class went through based on our questions. Despite my poor English, I could communicate with others including exchange students. Sometimes I was asked about education in my own country but I couldn't answer all. As I learn about Finnish education deeply, I felt that I don't know very much about Japanese education system and problems. I learned that when learning about other countries, I should understand more about my own country at the same time.

Overall, it was a great opportunity for me to think about education. This experience enhanced my motivation toward study. Actually, I have never worked harder in any other classes. By working hard with strong curiosity like this, I can improve my learning by myself. I don't know whether I'm going to be a teacher or study in education further in the future, but I'm sure that I will never forget this global praxis. From now, I want to keep studying in kind of Finnish way in other subjects too. Of course, I couldn't accomplish my tasks and have great time without such a nice learning environment. I'd like to thank everyone.

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INTRODUCTION

From 09/09/2018-19/09/2018, I went to Tampere, Helsinki, Finland. In Tampere, there

was five-day courses, lecture on Finland's education and some excursion to places such as basic schools, daycare center and teacher education department. In Helsinki, I had a lecture on teaching method of higher education. These are what I have learned from the stay.

HOW FINNISH PEOPLE REGARD THE ENVIRONMENT

Through the courses I have learnt many ideas about Finnish education but the idea that deeply impressed me was how Finnish people put emphasis on environment. There were two points of view they regarded environment.

First, Finnish people does not blame on teacher or children and the responsibility relies on environment. For instance, when I went to the daycare center, the staffs told us that whenever there is a problem with the child they don't punish or blame for the children. They just change the environment suitable for the child. If the child couldn't sleep in the nap time they don't have to. They can go play until he/she gets sleepy. Also, when I went to the basic schools, I heard that when student does not like the teacher's class and complains to the principal, the teacher is not blamed for it. The school give other choices to changes the



Sharing ideas by exchanging paper planes



Asking questions after class

environment for the student and teacher can get some support to improve his/her skills or some ways he/she can work more effectively. Therefore, teacher can have enough freedom to do what he/she wants to do. This Finnish way of thinking -environment centered society-, has its basis on the idea of trust. In the course, lecturer Johanna repeatedly stressed that Finland's education has strong trust. Trust toward teachers that they are professionals, trust toward students that they have ability to learn and trust toward education that it makes the society a better place in the future. If you have enough trust, you don't have to punish teacher or students. You just have to think that there is something wrong with the environment or the environment just didn't suit for that people. This Finnish way of thinking can release people from the stress and makes them easier to live.

On the other hand, Finnish people also brought attention to learning environment as well. Learning environment - school architecture, classrooms, special rooms, and so on - was prepared perfectly for students to learn. Therefore, teachers and students are able to learn flexibly because they don't have to consider about environmental factors and act freedom. For example, in basic schools we have visited, there is a balance ball you can sit in if you are not good at concentrating or the

special rooms such as room for textile and room for craft full of professional machines. Teachers pay attention to learning environment as well and students took off their shoes when they enter the classroom in order to make them relaxed. However, in Japan, there are even some schools without air conditioners and some students who has difficulty on sitting at classes has hard time. Japanese people believe that in the younger time you need to learn how to tolerate the harsh environment so the children's environment is not considered as the essential element. Also, in Finland most of the text books were lent from the school as well. At university, there were a lot of free spaces with sofas and coffee machines you can use. This can enhance not deepening your relationship with your friends but discussing in group works as well. Learning environment is neatly designed to keep the student's motivations high.

ATTITUDE ON TAKING

CLASSES/CURRICULUM DIFFERENCES

For the skills and attitude what I obtained from the program is the active attitude in classes. Even though I was not an active learner in Japan, I was able to have active attitude toward the classes in the end. This is partly because of the exchange students. When I was taking a lecture in Tampere, a lot of exchange student made a question while the teacher was speaking and they seemed to have the right to ask questions whenever and whatever they wanted to. Teacher would answer simply and gives another perspective so the question was never useless. I was afraid of making questions that it might hinder other one's learning, but I learned that any question can be possible because it can actually accelerate the learning of other people. For this reason, I became confident in making questions during the classes. Also, if I try to make some questions, I

had to concentrate on classes and required critical way of thinking as well. Even though it was a one-way styled lecture, I was not passive and tried to think hard.

So, while I was in Finland, I was able to be more active, but what makes the difference of Japanese students and foreign students? One reason I came up from the lecture is the curriculum.

Japanese curriculum has strict rules on the curriculum and it is decided by the government. Amount of curriculum is huge as well. It is tended to teach as much knowledge's as possible. On the other hand, in Finland, the were less curriculum. This is described as 'Less is More'. Johanna also said 'Finland thinks life-long learning is important so when we think about education, what is going to be important after 50 years is taught. If you only teach knowledge's you forget them. But if you teach them how and where you can get the knowledge you want through education, it can be useful for a long time. 'Hence, Finnish students has much more time to think and make questions than Japanese students from the elementary school. Japanese students, like I thought questioning might interrupt the class, has no room for students and teacher to think critically.

Like this difference, the other difference comes from the construction of the education and the construction of the education came from the difference of society. Considering about the difference you should also compare the context. Just comparing what is good and what is bad and not making any judgment based on one side of the fact is wrong. Therefore, you cannot only try to copy Finland's education system. Paying attention to the context is what I have also learned from the Finland as well.

EDUCATION IS THE FUTURE

Through the courses I reconfirmed the importance of the education. Juha the lecturer in day 2 said 'Education is the Future.' Although I said Japan cannot just copy Finland education system, they can still have same passion as Finland has toward education.

My goal of the global praxis was to find whether I have true passion toward education and am interested into it. I am not sure if it is a true passion but I still found education as an interesting object and would like to continue the study. My goal of the future is to provide 'education with freedom' to the children. I am still wondering what the 'education with freedom' indicates and from the Finnish way of learning I was able to have one idea that if the environment is organized there is more freedom. I wish to learn more about how environment can affect people in my university studies. This praxis motivated me to learn more and actively. It became a point where I would like to go back if I get lost in the future.



We're back in Japan

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