

How Kindergarten Teacher acquire the Responsibility? :

Focusing on Zainichi Korean Kindergarten in Japan

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1. Background

Among Zainichi Koreans, Zainichi Korean schools are known as '*Uri Hakkyo*=our school' and are the most important center in the Zainichi Korean community (Park, 2012). The nationality of Zainichi Korean school children on the alien registration is mostly 'North Korean' or 'South Korean', with some children having Japanese nationality. In exceptional cases, Koreans who came to Japan from China have studied at Korean schools. The reason for this is that children with ethnic roots are allowed to enroll.

There are three main educational needs of Zainichi Korean school. One is to raise children so that they can live a secure and sufficient life in Japanese society. Secondly, they want their children to be raised not only to know their mother tongue and rich ethnic culture, but also to have a solid knowledge of the Japanese language and society, and to be able to deepen friendship and goodwill with the Japanese people. In other words, we want them to be able to maintain a balance between ethnic awareness and an international outlook. The children should be brought up to fully develop their potential and utilize their individuality to become people who can play an active role in Japanese and international society (Park, 2008).

In line with the needs of Zainichi Koreans and their educational needs, the Zainichi Korean school states that the purpose of education is to help children born and raised in Japan acquire ethnic awareness and ethnic background as Koreans, correct historical awareness and modern scientific knowledge, and to nurture true humanity and healthy bodies.

A review of previous studies shows that there are a wide range of studies, such as one that depicts the way of life of high school students at a Zainichi Korean school from a participatory observation study (Yamamoto2022) and another that considers the discourse space surrounding Koreans in Japan and the redrawing of the concept of 'ethnicity' from a sociological and philosophical perspective, considering the author's personal experience (Lee2016).

However, as far as we can see, there are no studies on early childhood education, which can be regarded as the start and foundation of education in Zainichi Korean school. Identifying what kind of education is provided in Zainichi Korean kindergarten and how they try to nurture ethnic identity is very important for considering the early childhood education of 'all children', including children who are sometimes subject to discrimination and persecution.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this study were therefore to first introduce the curriculum content of Zainichi Korean kindergartens in Japan, and then to clarify how A kindergarten teacher education for children from the perspective of educational anthropology. The research method consisted of first visiting a Korean kindergarten in Japan and then interviewing A kindergarten teacher. The study was conducted in accordance with the research ethics of the researcher's university.

3. Result

To put it simply, the curriculum of A Zainichi Korean kindergarten in Japan is as follows: To bring up healthy children both mentally and physically, and to lay the foundation for ethnic education. (For example, by spending time using the Korean language, children naturally acquire the Korean language and develop a national spirit through folk culture such as songs, dances and events.) The children's individual feelings are valued, and they are accepted and loved as they are, which helps to stabilize their hearts. To nurture a strong body and mind through play, exercise, and nutritional education.)

3-1. Education and Care Policy

- ▷Understanding the development of each child, building a comfortable relationship with the caregivers, and providing fulfilling childcare. (For example, build warm relationships and provide loving care so that the children can become a second home.)
- ▷The children's parents are encouraged to take care of their own children and to ensure that they develop a healthy and safe lifestyle.
- ▷The children are encouraged to learn to accept each other in a group environment and to develop self-confidence. (For example, aim to create a kindergarten that is loved by the local community, where communication is strong, and children can talk about any problems they may have.)
- ▷Inclusive education and care

3-2. Education and Care Objectives

The following are the goals of Zainichi Korean kindergartens' education: 11 images of desirable children to acquire before school age.

1. to enable children to naturally have a sense of self-respect as Koreans, 2. to enable children to naturally learn the Korean language by living in a circle, 3. to enable children to lead a safe and healthy life with a stable mind and healthy body, 4. to enable children to be proactive in the school environment, to enjoy themselves and to develop an independent mind to achieve things on their own, 5. to enable children to share ideas with their friends in a group environment and to cooperate with them to achieve common goals, 6. to enable children to empathize with the feelings of their friends and to develop a moral and normative awareness of what is good and bad and what must be observed through rich experiences together with their friends, 7. Children develop a sense of closeness to social life and an interest in public information through their involvement with their peers and the local community, 8. Children develop an interest in seasonal changes, plants and animals and a respect for life through their experiences in nature, 9. Children learn a rich variety of language through the enjoyment of picture books and stories, and are able to express their experiences, thoughts and feelings verbally, 10. to enable children to express their rich sensibilities through the use of a variety of materials and to develop a joy and desire to express themselves, 11. to encourage children to develop an interest in quantities, graphic signs and letters.

3-3. Interview with kindergarten teacher

A kindergarten teacher originally came from a Zainichi Korean kindergarten herself, and her reason for becoming a teacher was that she liked her own teachers because they seemed to have fun. However, when A kindergarten teacher actually worked as a kindergarten teacher, she discovered that "so many people are involved in kindergartens! and she thought, "I was protected when I was a kindergartener too". From these thoughts and discoveries, she says, she developed a "sense of responsibility to work harder in early childhood education and care". A kindergarten teacher then positioned the role of the kindergarten teacher as "removing the 'thorn' from each child's life". She also said that "the kindergarten teacher should be a parent, sister and friend to the children and their parents". Furthermore, in order to carry on the Zainichi Korean kindergarten philosophy, they are also aware of their involvement with high school students and graduates of Zainichi Korean schools located on the same campus.

Considering the above, A kindergarten teacher regarded the kindergarten as 'the center of the community of compatriots=Uri' and naturally fostered a sense of responsibility for education and care. Based on the analysis of the results of this research, Zainichi Korean kindergarten can be considered to have adequate quality of education and care.

4. Conclusion

What is important for early childhood education and care settings is the idea of 'in middle voice'. By thinking of 'education and care' in terms of 'outside/inside' (cf. Benveniste 1966), rather than distinguishing 'education and care' in terms of 'doing/being done', the intricately entangled 'threads of education and care' are unraveled and spun together. We can only be 'responsible' beyond the middle voice. We can only 'respond' in continuity with the past by thinking in the middle voice.