

The Development of the Quality of the Human Relations in the Early Childhood.

-the socio-metric system at the playing time-

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Introduction

A couple years ago, I took the examination for kindergarten teacher of the certain municipal government board of education. At the interview, I was asked how I could treat some children who did not stay with other children. Then, I thought, as they were not interested in the activities of other children, they left themselves alone. If we presented an attractive activity for them, they might come to us and join us to make the same activities. After a while, I came to know that I was false. It was not true that they were not interested in the activities, but they were not interested in their friends. They were not able to stay with other children or liked to spend most of time by themselves. I was told a solution by the teacher of the education department of Bukkyo University in Kyoto that I must think of the relationship with the isolated children as the most important subject. They and I should take any attraction to other children. For that purpose, at first they and I had to play together, then, we must take other children into our activity.

When I was interviewed that question at the examination for kindergarten teacher, I did not think that kind of phenomenon was serious. These days, we are getting to recognize the importance of the human relations under the influence of young children's crime. I wonder what happen to young children on the human relations. I realized that the hazard on the human relations is increasing and getting serious. I asked some kindergarten and nursery schoolteachers about the human relations among children. The answers were surprising. About a decade ago, a book was published about this kind of subject. In that book, the hazard of human relations was limited only specific children, for example, developmental delay, negative, and physical weakness. Thus, there was such kind of child at a school. However, teachers told me that there was at

least one child at a class who does not stay with other children. The question is not only that kind of case, but there are also some children who have limited relations with other children. That means that they always stay with the same friend. They do not make any relationship with other children except their specific children. Some teachers are thinking what made these kinds of problems. The others do not think it serious. They think it as individual subject. It depends on their personality, they said. Thus, they believe that they must change children's conditions. As a tendency, teachers who have more than ten years teaching career are former, and those who have less than ten years career are latter. If there are something serious behind his phenomenon, we must find out a solution for our children. Therefore, we must find out what happens to our children.

Some teachers think of the factors about that phenomenon.

- a. Small family; during these couple of decades, the number of brothers and sisters are decreasing. Only one child family used to be rare, but nowadays it is comparatively major style of Japanese. There are some reason behind it, housing, educational cost, and so on.
- b. Decreasing time for play; under the academic background society, children have to learn English, calculation, and piano as early as possible. Besides their time for learning, they must decrease time for play.
- c. Video games; the video games in Japan rapidly expanded. Many families have at least one game machine. Children can play video games by themselves. They do not need any friends. Or, even though they play video games with friends, they do not need communication with their friends. It does not seem to play together for them.
- d. Less friends in the community; only one child

family phenomena deprived friends in the same community. Children have lost a chance to play among the same and similar generations.

- e. Relationship between parents and their friends; the relationship in the community is getting weak. This may be reason why Japanese young adult generation does not like deep relationship with others. So, they often like to spend with specific friends.
- f. Parents choose their children's friends in some reasons. They say "Our child likes to spend with this child." However, teachers guess that they choose friend with good social status background.
- g. Absence of knowledge of nursing for parents; most of Japanese families are consisted of single generation Children in the community are getting less. There is less communication in the community. Parents depend on nursing manual books too much. It is first time to meet the parents who have the same age of their child for those parents. Then, they come to know how to take care of their children. These factors are based on teachers' experiences.ⁱ

Children used to be thought that they could make friends easily even though they met first time, and they could share play quickly. What is happening to children? What kindergarten and nursing schoolteachers guessed might be possible, but I think that the factors are complex because several environments influence human beings. Thus, I must find out how many factors there are what factor is most influenced, and how factors influence children.

Chapter 1. Purpose

But, there are some questions to find out factors. I think that the relationship between human being is not so easy. We can not describe that he has many friends, or he likes isolation.; That is just the amount. The quantity is not same as the quality. There are depth and width about human relationship. I think there may be some stages on human relationship. Almost 30 years ago, Dr. Mioji Saito, who was a professor of Aichi University of Education, studied the classification of play, the point of development. This study is based on the age of children. I think this work is valuable, but

this point of view is age. I think even children are same age, their quality of play is not same. The age is very important factor to judge the quality of play, but it does not explain the reason why children tend to be alone even 6 years old. Therefore, I would like to study about this. But, I would like to study it based on his work. To recognize these stages may help us to find factors. Here, I attempt to categorize the relationship among children. And, I would like to help that we can find out factors, which influence children's relationship in the future.

I would like to clear the difference among the same age and similarity among the different age, and categorized quality of the human relations through the cases of children's plays at the kindergarten.

Chapter 2. Approach

1. Method

- a. Place; the kindergarten of the Hyogo University of Teacher Education in Yashiro, Hyogo prefecture.
- b. Age; from 3 to 6 years old
- c. Period and Time of observation; September 8th and 9th, 1998, from 8:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. that is called "Ureshino Time", which was established for free activities for children. Children start to come to kindergarten between 8:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. There are some parents around there at that time. The condition of children are several, some are sleepy, grumpy, and hungry. But, they began their favorite activities with some friends or alone. Classes are mixed. There is no regulation for activities. They are allowed to make activities in the room, playground and the rabbit gaze. Teachers make some activities for example playing soccer, feeding pets, and making crafts with a part of children.
- d. Method of recording; Portable VCR.

I must pay attention to the children's intention to me. Because playing with children disturbs my observation. I must record their natural behavior, conversation, and so on. Because I must relieve them under the pressure. For that purpose, I should record them as if I were a stone on the ground. I kept some distance for them.

The children who were recorded by me did not ask any questions about my portable VCR. I recorded a group of children whose number was more than two. I paid attention to their behavior and communication. I analyzed the recorded tape at my house.

2. The point of view

I think that the factor, which prescribes the human relationship, must be trust. The depth of the human relationship is related to how much trust they have. Therefore, that is a question how I can measure the trust among children. I concentrated children's behavior and communication. I wonder how they behave and have the communication each other among children. I noticed some points of view while I was observing.

At first, how do they communicate each other? J. Dewey said "Communication is very important method to share experiences." ¹⁴ Without communication, we do not understand each other. Communication connects us. Communication means not only verbal communication, but also non-verbal communication. Communication is to begin the human relation as well as to deepen it. Thus, I think that the amount of children's communication is very important.

Second, how do they help each other? If they want to enjoy play with other children, they must cooperate each other in the same activity. I must find out how they help each other.

Third, how do they keep rules? To keep a rule, or to respect a rule means giving trust to other children, but if you do not trust someone, you make a rule with him. I think that keeping a rule and respecting a rule have two opposite meanings.

Forth, how do they understand the role of play? If we make action together, we must understand goal. Without understanding our purpose, we can not reach to our goal together. If, I understand, each of children playing together knows their role in their play, they understand their goal in their play. Finally, how do they share image of activities? They have to know their goal of activity. But it is not enough, until their goal, they must know where they are. If they share the image, they

can easily help each other.

These points of view are consisted in most of children's activities, which I observed at the kindergarten.

Chapter 3. Categorization through my observing children's play

Section 1. The cases of play

I would like to introduce the cases of play of children, which I took at the kindergarten.

Case 1. Soccer

First, there were five boys. Each boy had his own ball and kicked it against wall. Second, two groups of boys were formed and kicked each other. Third, they made one group, and began to play a game. A boy said "It is a off-side." I thought they had a rule but it might be not their own rule. It might be J-league rule. Finally, a teacher joined the game. She told children to call more children to join them. Children started to go for calling other children. A couple minutes late, they prepared two soccer goals, took apart of two teams, and set off the game. The teacher took a role of judge.

Case 2. Drawing

Two boys drew pictures on the playground. They were drawing at the same place but they did not talk at all.

Case 3. Playing a house

Spontaneously, some children came to a play-house. They decided their role. Then, they brought some tools, for example, source pan, kettle, and cooking board. They seemed to begin to play a house.

Case 4. Isolation

A boy poured water into a pot by himself. A teacher was by him. The teacher tried to talk to him, but he did not answer to him.

Case 5. A playground equipment

Four children played at the play ground equipment. They talked and enjoyed, but they enjoyed by themselves. They did not play together.

Case 6. Blocks

Two boys played with large blocks. They built an airplane. However, they did not talk about their plane at all.

Watching those cases, I can find some clues

for classifying the human relations.

1. At the beginning, children played alone, then some children came together. Then, they began to play under a rule. Finally, authorized person conducted the game.
2. They enjoyed drawing but not playing together. The pictures were not same, or similar. They might stay together. They did not talk at all.
3. From the beginning, children came together, they decided the role, and then, they prepared toys and tools. They did not talk so much. But soon after the starting to play a house, they played the role and talked.
4. I thought this was a teacher's one way communication. The teacher did not understand what he imaged. He did not communicate with a person who did not understand him.
5. They enjoyed play at the playground equipment, not friends. By chance, children who like to play it came together. Their rules and images were not same or similar.
6. Their image about an airplane is very similar. Thus, they could build an airplane without any talking.

Section 2. The Dr. M. Saito's theory about development of play

He classified play of children in two points of view. One was "theme," the other was "rule." "Theme" meant how children expressed the content of their play by the behavior or language. Judging from this point of view.

- A. The play without "theme"
- B. "Theme" by behavior
- C. "Theme" by language

Observing plays by this point of rule, we can see not only the change of quantity (increase of rules), but also quality (physical to relational) [table 1, 2] This change shows that play develops on the group of stages.

1. At the stage of the simple repeat of the play without "theme", we can see the play without a rule.
2. At the stage of "theme" by behavior, we can see the play with ad hoc rule.
3. At the stage of "theme" by language, we can see the play with relational rule.

He said that the stages of play were based on prior stage, but after children took the prior stage of play into inside, they stepped up to the next stage. [Table 3]

I would like to classify the human relations based on that point. And I also think that the development of human relations is regulated by the following three aspects, image, communication, and rule-respect. I would like to renewal his designs. Here, I classify the quality of human relation in three levels and five stages.

Section 3. Renewal

I attempted to classify the quality of human relations into three levels and five stages with three aspects of images, communication, and rule-respect.

1. Image

I think it is very important to share image of play for children who attend the same activity. For example, a couple of children play with big blocks to build an airplane. If their image is quite different, they can not complete their airplane. Or, if some children play a house, without sharing image, they live in a different house. To share the image makes their play complete.

2. Communication

The communication both verbal and non-verbal is needed to share image. The more communication they have, the more they understand each other. The amount of communication among children expresses how much they have relationship.

3. Rule-respect

There are a couple of rules in an easy play. For example, a slid, they regard it as a mountain, that is a rule. Rule making helps to share an image of play. I think that a person never promises a rule with a person whom he hates. That means that they need some trust to make a rule. I think there are two types, one is to obey general rule in their society, and the other is to make a rule among children. The latter is needed more trust among children.

Chapter 3. Categories

a. Three levels

The point of image as followings can classify

three levels,

1. Non-image sharing
2. Partly image sharing
3. Completely image sharing.

1. Non-image sharing

There are no sharing images among children who are alone or even together.

2. Partly image sharing

Children do not share image of activity well. But they can make some activities together. They need explanation on each activity to do at each time each other.

3. Completely image sharing

At first, children decide what they are going to do. Then, children can understand their activity each other without any explanations during their activity.

These are classified by how much children share their image on play together.

b. Five stages

Five stages are classified

By communication;

1. Non-communication
2. Minimum necessity communication
3. Fully-communication,

Rule-respect;

1. Non-rule
2. Heteronym rule
3. Autonomy rule

1. Non-communication

There is no communication among children even though they stay together.

2. Minimum necessity communication

Their communication among children appears just when they feel necessity.

3. Full-communication

The communication among children is made for not only explanation about activity but also enjoying itself.

1. Non-rule

There is no rule among their play. Even they do not make rules. Because they play together, but they do not join the play. Each enjoys by himself. They share time and space, but they do not share joy. Thus, they do not need rules.

2. Heteronym rule

They enjoy sharing time, space, and joy.

However, their trust is not enough strong to control them by themselves. They can not ask a child to make their rule, and they can not negotiate each other to make rules. Therefore, they take rules, which are made by other people, or social rules.

3. Autonomy rule

They can make their own rules by negotiation or other methods. They trust each other very much. They can solve their troubles by themselves.

I am going to categorize the quality of the human relations into three levels and five stages with those aspects. (Table4)

A. Isolation

B. Non-communication but staying together

C. Communication but no rule

D. Heteronym rule & communication

E. Autonomy rule & communication

A. Isolation

The condition that child does not spend their time with other children. For example, drawing picture.

B. Non-communication but staying together

Children seem to play with other child, but they do not either share image, or communication. They are together, but they do not play together. For example, a child drew on ground, another child stayed beside him and drew on ground, but there was no communication.

D. Communication but no rule

Children play at the same place and enjoy communication, but they do not have rules, for example, when they play at ground equipment, they enjoy playing with it, but they do not enjoyed playing with their friends.

E. Heteronym rule & communication

When children play soccer, they use J-League soccer rules. Or, if there is a kindergarten teacher, children obey the rule, which is made by the teacher. They can share image, and have communication, but they can not make their own rules.

F. Autonomy rule & communication

On playing a house, they must make their own rules. Each child has to understand what it should do for playing a house. They attempt to

help each other, for example, a child brings a source pan, and another child brings water. They must trust each other.

Conclusion

As I explained above, we can categorize the activities of children with three levels and five stages. These levels and stages are classified based on three aspects of contents of children's activities. But, I think the base of the human relationship is trust. The meaning of the development of human relationship is to develop the trust between more than two persons. It is very difficult to evaluate human trust. A mouth does not always speak only truth. Therefore, I attempted three aspects, which can be judged by looking outside. These levels and stages are based on real children's activities. It is true that children's activities are not easily cut down. They are more complex. I think these levels and stages will help to find out the factors, which influence the relationship to children.

The quality of human relationship is influenced by their ability to create, maintain, and develop mutual human relations. The ability of human relations is called the third human ability, following intelligence and emotion. Thus, we must find out how to measure the third human ability.

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- i These are based on the paper of Hiroaki Sono at the Japan Society of Children Study 1998 in Sendai.
- ii Dewey, John, translated by Hiroyuki Kanemaru, Democracy and Education 1984 Tamagawadaigaku Shuppanbu, pp.36-37
- iii Saito, Mioji, Asobi to Youjiki, 1974 Fukumura Shuppan. pp.159-161

Age	"Rule"	Role sharing			sum
		No	unclear	Yes	
4	Yes	31	7	10	48
	No	4	1	4	9
5	Yes	9	7	6	22
	No	2	3	6	11
6	Yes	7	4	6	17
	No	0	2	32	34

Table 1. Role sharing and "rule" of play

Age	rule	theme	behavioral theme	language theme	sum
4	Yes	18	14	16	48
	No	0	4	5	9
5	Yes	5	5	12	22
	No	0	10	6	11
6	Yes	4	4	9	17
	No	0	7	27	34

Table 2. "Rule" & "Theme" in play

Stage	name
1	Pre-play
	Observing play
	Simple imitation play
2	Play without "rule" & "theme"
	Play with "theme" but without "rule"
	Play with "theme" & building "rule"
3	Play with "theme" & rule

Table 3. The stages of development of play

Stage	image	communication	Rule-respect	name
1	Low	Low	Low	Isolation
2	↑	↑	↑	Non-communication but staying together
3	↑	↑	↑	Communication but no rule
4	↓	↓	↓	Heteronym rule & communication
5	High	High	High	Autonomy rule & communication

Table 4. The stage of development of the human relational quality

幼児期における人間関係の質的発達とカテゴリー —幼稚園の遊び時間における観察事例をもとにして—

要 約

子ども社会において人間関係作りの難しさが指摘されることが多くなってきた。保育現場からの報告によると、幼稚園や保育所において1日中1人で過ごしたり、特定の仲間としか遊ぶことが出来ない子どもが目立ってきている。友達ができない子どもについての研究はかねてより行われてきているが、以前と比べると質ならびに量において変化が見られる。量においては人間関係作りの難しい子どもが目立ち初め、質においては、かつては性格的に他者から受け入れられない、例えば、暴力的であるなど、このような状況であったのであるが、昨今ではむしろ自分の方から積極的に関わりを持とうとしなくなっているのである。このようなことから、ここ数年の間に子ども社会にどのような変化が起こってきたかについて考える必要がある。社会においては少子化現象・子どもにおいては遊び時間の短縮や遊びの質的变化などが考えられるが、その要因としてあげられるのは様々である。しかし、何が、もしくはどのように組み合わせることによって、人間関係作りの難しい子どもを形成しているであろうか。その要因を見つけ出すことが重要である。

各々の要因についてはその強度・量・方向性によって違いが生じる、また幾つかの要因が複雑に絡み合うことで結果においてはさらなる差異が生じてくる。したがって、安易に人間関係作りの難しい子どもとそうでない子どもとの二元的に分けることでは本質的な問題は見えてこない。そこで人間関係において、そのつながり方に幾つかの段階があるものであると推察するのである。これは例えば子どもの友達の人数が多いか少ないかというような見方もあるが、しかし一方で、「友達は多いが親友と呼べる者はいない」というように、数と深さは必ずしも一致するとは限らない。ここで問題としたいのは、「数」よりも「質」である。したがって子ども期における人間関係の質的段階について考える必要がある。

人間関係模様が顕著に見られるのは、自由遊び時間である。したがって、遊びにおける子どもの人間関係を観察することが最適な方法であると考えた。遊びについてはピアジェなどによって、その発達が述べられている。しかし、一般的に述べられているのは、認知発達に基づく遊びの発達であって、主として年齢段階によって規定されているものである。しかし、そうしたモデルでは同年齢における差異、異年齢における同質性についての説明には不十分である。そこで新たな指標が必要となってくる。そこで「遊びの発達」のモデルを用いて、それに新たにコミュニケーションという軸を盛り込むことにより、イメージの共有を基本として三水準に分け、コミュニケーションとルールを基本としてそれを五段階に分けることにした。

この三水準五段階モデルによって、子ども同志の人間関係における信頼関係を見ることで、子どもの人間関係の質的段階を判断できるものと考えられる。しかし、子どもの信頼関係というのは相対的なものであるので、相手が変わることによってその質的な変化が起こるのではなかろうか。したがって、子どもの複数の人間関係にも目配りをしていく必要がある。それにより、子どもがどれほどの人間関係を持つことができるのかが明らかになる。子ども個人の持つ人間的能力としての「人間関係力」を導き出すことができるのである。