Critical

Approaches

to Arts-based

Research

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ABOUT THE
E–JOURNAL

The UNESCO Observatory refereed e-journal is based within the Graduate School of Education at The University of Melbourne, Australia. The journal promotes multi-disciplinary research in the Arts and Education and arose out of a recognised need for knowledge sharing in the field. The publication of diverse arts and cultural experiences within a multi-disciplinary context informs the development of future initiatives in this expanding field. There are many instances where the arts work successfully in collaboration with formerly non-traditional partners such as the sciences and health care, and this peer-reviewed journal aims to publish examples of excellence.

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Critical Approaches to Arts-Based Research

Guest Editors   Anne Harris

Mary Ann Hunter

Clare Hall

THEME   Arts based research (ABR), its products, processes and critical theorising have come a long way in recent times. Nuanced distinctions indicate the development of the field, as arts-informed research, arts-based research, practice-led research, applied research, and creative participatory action research all claim different relationships with the art and criticality present in such innovative scholarship. Finally, it seems, we are moving away from a defensive stance regarding arts based research and its 'validity', and toward a celebration of this proliferation of diverse ways of knowing, theorising and doing research. This 'coming of age' is evident in this special issue, which urges readers to move beyond binarised notions of scientific 'versus' arts based research that still at times dominates academic research environments and conversations, and outmoded practice/theory divides. For we co-editors and for the authors here, theorising is indeed a creative practice, and goes hand-in-hand with the epistemological and ontological potential of arts-making methods. This issue celebrates the opening of new doors in theorising innovative arts based research from a range of global contexts, theoretical and epistemological frameworks, and inter/disciplines. We avoid any attempt to codify or limit the parameters of what contemporary arts based research is or can be. Indeed, we seek the opposite: to highlight its ever-expanding possibilities.

The essays here aim to encourage critical analysis and dialogue about the objects and subjects of arts based research for contemporary times, poststructuralist, posthuman and other critical approaches to arts based research, and the interdisciplinary application of performative and practice-led research in transferable methodological models. We are pleased to be able to include digital assets with many of the articles in this special issue. Indeed, the layered and multimodal complexity of arts based 'outputs' or artefacts is one of its rich distinguishing features, and it requires commitment from editors and publishers to not always demand a 'reduction' back into text-based forms, a diminishment of many forms of ABR. For this we thank the UNESCO editorial and production team, and hope you enjoy this contribution to the critical development of the arts based research field.

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OBSERVATORY

How Students Learn an Arts-Based Approach to Early Childhood Education[i]

AUTHOR

Koichi Kasahara
Associate Professor
Early Childhood Education
Faculty of Education
Fukuoka University of Education

ABSTRACT

Arts-based research is both a conceptual research activity and practical inquiry. In a contemporary worldview, multiple realities and a diversity of life-worlds – approaches which deal with multiple phenomena – take on the role of advocating a post-positivist approach. However, an understanding of the approach is not enough for training Japanese teachers in early childhood education. Therefore, in this article, I further develop my visual art training program as a practical lesson for arts-based approaches.

These lessons consist of thematic brainstorming, outdoor sensory discovery, inquiry with sketchbooks, and sensory dialogue. Students feel and recognize "sound", "wind", and "light" by various senses and images. They then draw and paint the feeling, perception and thought as visual image and text. They show and talk about each picture and generate new ideas and questions as inquiries. Sharing each inquiry by presentation and discussion helps develops ideas in a generative manner.

Through the case study, I assert that developing a program of learning arts-based approaches, it is effective to construct it by including observation, drawing and painting as a basic visual art method, including an inquiry process as corroborative work and generative dialogue using sensory and bodily experience. The program that comprises this study consists of practical knowledge of the approach and methodology for an undergraduate teacher training program.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to understand an arts-based approach for an undergraduate program in early childhood education in Japan. This study describes a lesson on Visual Art training, which was conducted by the author with undergraduate students at the Fukuoka University of Education [ii] in 2014.

In recent years, the arts have been recognized as an effective inquiry and symbolic generative method for education within multiple perspectives and pluralistic worldviews (Kariyado, Saeki & Takagi 2012). Contemporary society is characterised by its diversity and diverse approaches in understanding it. Minami (2004) described such a phenomenological state of the life-world (Husserl 1936) as ecological realities. Inquiries based on arts enable the integretation of such a multiple and a pluralistic perspective in approaching contemporary life-worlds.

The field of education is constructed by multiple phenomenological perceptions and cognitions (Kujiraoka 2013). It is more important to attend to body and mind as phenomenological reduction the study of young children, and release preconceived notions of subjectivity and learning (Husserl 1936). For multi-perspectival inquiries, arts-based approaches give us new experiential methods and methodologies, often combined with critical theoretical frameworks.

Arts-based research allows researchers to extend beyond the limiting constrains of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable (Eisner 2012, p. 1). Eisner claimed that a conventional post-positivist framework is not useful to treat the ineffable, including multiple and pluralistic phenomena. Eisner asserted the unique contribution of arts-based research (ABR) as

> "effectively employs aesthetic dimensions in both its inquiry and representational phases, to that extent the work may provide an important public service that may be otherwise unavailable" (p. 13).

Sensory and subjective experience (the ineffable) is by its nature difficult to express and represent. For Finley (2008), arts-based inquiry is able to explore multiple, new, and diverse ways of understanding and living in the world (2008, p. 71). Arts-based approaches of course are not only for researchers and artists, but educators and children as well. Prosser and Burke (2008) argue that image-based educational research can foreground the participation of children within a child-centered methodology. The arts can provide aesthetic and sensory dimensions with new and more dynamic possibilities for children. Therefore, it is worth learning the approach for the sake of students, as well as to attempt to develop a more effective teacher training program in early childhood education.

2. BACKGROUND

Teacher training programs for early childhood education in Japan do not sufficiently treat such ambiguous experiences and multiple phenomena, including diverse and pluralistic realities. There are three potential causes for this challenge:

First, mainstream kindergartens and schools demand that students utilize skills and techniques as soon as they first enter

their place of learning. As a result, teachers are required to provide skills and techniques that can be learned rapidly and used immediately.

Second, most of the students who learn in early childhood education have insufficient understanding and technique for self-expression and self-representation. Under these circumstances comes a program of compulsory arts instruction that consists of fifteen lessons (each one 90 minutes), and contain history and learning theory. Due to time constraints, many early education courses have difficulty providing an opportunity to learn arts-based approaches and to build skills in the areas of expression, genre and appreciation of art.

Third, and perhaps most challenging, is that academic staff responsible for teaching art education do not have sufficient understandings and methods to train students in arts based approaches within teacher training curriculum and courses.

Arts-based approaches are an effective and integrative method of inquiry in early childhood education. This view of art education (through arts based approaches) in Japan was highly influenced by the exhibition "The Hundred Languages of Children", a show that highlighted the Reggio Emilia Approach, held in Tokyo in 2001, spawning many related Japanese books (including, for example, Ishigaki & Tamaki 2000; Sato, Akita & Tsukada 2001; Mori 2013). The Reggio Approach introduced synthetic inquiry and expression through arts, and a new possibility for expressive practice. However, it is not easy for many educators to utilize it on a widespread basis.

In Japan, the only writings about this point are by Akita, et al. (2007) and Kitagawa (2013), both of which are based on Barone and Eisner (2012). According to Akita, an arts-based approach is a research approach that feels and recognizes a unique, direct experience, and experience of a one-time nature. Aesthetic and non-verbal aspects may be included, for example experiences

that make up a story including poetic language and metaphor (Akita 2007, p. 14-15). Kitagawa (2013) discusses the necessity of exploring post-positivism, of which arts-based research is an important part (Husserl 1936; Barone & Eisner 2012), and which offers practical insights. Therefore, I conducted an investigation into the practical and methodical understandings of arts-based approaches in the context of early childhood teacher training in Japan, using an analysis of students' lessons.

3. CASE STUDY

The details of this case study are as follows.

Title: Arts-Based Inquiry for Multiple Realities in Natural Environmental Experience

Date: 9, 16, 23 Fri May 2014. (Three lessons)
10:25 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. (90 minutes)

Site: Seminar room in Fukuoka University of Education

Participants: 16 students
15 persons were students of an early childhood education course.
1 person was from a school clinical education course.

Objective:

- Acquisition of a practical understanding and technique for arts-based approaches.

- Embodying the experiences of an inquiry with flexible and rich sensory abilities.

- Feel and recognize diverse aspects of phenomena and integrate them with visual expressions and representations.

- Understanding the way collaborative inquiries are mediated by arts and dialogue.

- Understanding the generative process of emergency curriculum and assessment.

4. LESSON 1: INSTRUCTION AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

4–1. INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

I began by explaining the theme of the lesson and concept of arts-based approaches to the students. My assertion was that the approach is the method of inquiry. It has a possibility to integrate multiple aspects and realities of a given phenomenon. For example, I drew an apple on the blackboard: we imagined the apple's color, taste, the existence of insects and butterflies, and the transition of seasons in an apple orchard. We can discover an ecological system and symbiosis through our arts-based experiential inquiry of the apple.

iii
http://elc.
unimelb.edu.au/
[Accessed: 13th
February 2015].

Next, I gave a lecture about the Reggio Emilia Approach (Edwards, Gandini & Forman 1998). I discussed the effectiveness and possibility of arts-based practices for early childhood education recognized by the Reggio Emilia Approach in Japan. I followed this by a review of the Early Learning Centre (ELC) iii at the University of Melbourne (Australia). ELC is an important institution and is well known for pioneering works of early childhood education practice and research which develop arts-based programs. The early learning curriculum of ELC integrates several arts-based approaches, including "An integrated curriculum that explores ideas through words, sounds, gestures, images and models. A curriculum centred on creative experiential processing where children's interests and ideas are realized and transform through a skill-based program…" (Deans 2012, p. 12). In addition, it offers "An arts-

based program that develops the artistry of children in response to their ideas and life experiences. One which engages children and teachers in a learning process that involves perception, expression and reflection…" (p. 16).
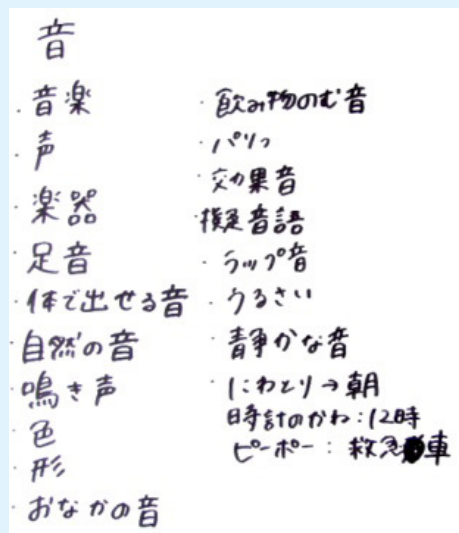
I collected data and materials of ELC through fieldwork and observatory research in March 2014. I joined class and observed a part of the "Family Farming" project. Through the research, I tried to understand the structure and process of the project, and how to emerge and generate new learning contexts and activities for children. What I found is that each step of practice is based on basic art and pedagogical interaction. The practice was very natural: children were performing creatively and steadily, with a rich, sensuous inquiry and understanding. ELC gave me the impetus for a lesson plan, beginning with observation of natural phenomena. By using tools as simple as pencils, pens, and watercolors, we can provide a semi-constructed and emergent process, which is generated by the art work process and dialogue as collaborative learning.

4-2. THEMATIC BRAINSTOMING

After the lecture, students divided into three groups (of 5-6 members) and were assigned the themes "wind", "sound", and "light." They started inquiry activities in a seminar room. I instructed them to talk freely about the theme and to write down what each member felt and talked about in the dialogue on a piece of paper (Table 1).
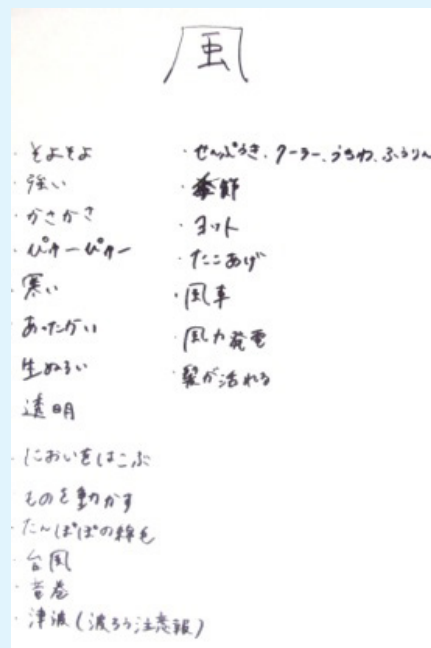
Sound

音
- 音楽
- 声
- 楽器
- 足音
- 体で出せる音
- 自然の音
- 鳴き声
- 色
- 形
- おなかの音

- 飲み物のむ音
- パリっ
- 効果音
- 擬音語
- ラップ音
- うるさい
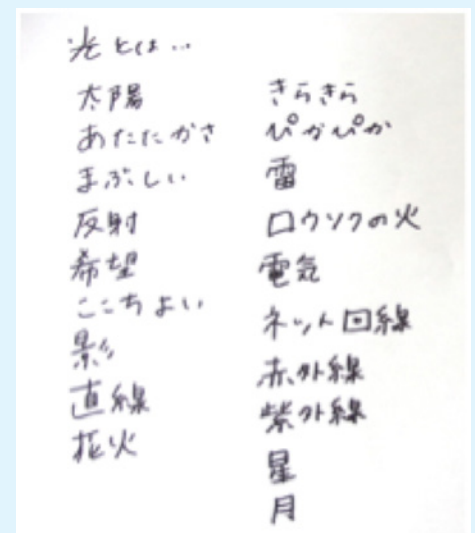- 静かな音
- にわとり→朝
  時計のかね：12時
  ピーポー：救急車

Music, voice, instruments, the sound of footsteps, bodily sounds, sounds of nature, chirping, colors, shapes, chiming of the stomach, the sound of drinking, Crisp!, sound effects, onomatopoeia, rap sounds, loud, quiet sounds, a hen –> morning, bell of the clock –> 12:00, siren of ambulances.

Wind

風
- そよそよ
- 強い
- かさかさ
- ピォーピォー
- 寒い
- あったかい
- 生ぬるい
- 透明

- においをはこぶ
- ものを動かす
- たんぽぽの綿毛
- 台風
- 竜巻
- 津波（波うち注意報）

- せんぷうき、クーラー、うちわ、ふうりん
- 季節
- ヨット
- たこあげ
- 風車
- 風力発電
- 髪が流れる

Sound of the breeze, strong, rustling sounds, the sound of the wind going "Pyu‑pyu", cold, warm, lukewarm, transparent, it carries smells, it moves things, Dandelion fluff, typhoons, tornados, tsunamis, high surf advisories, electric fans, fans, air conditioners, wind chimes, seasons, sailing, flying kites, wind turbines, wind power, shaking hair

Light

光とは…
- 太陽
- あたたかさ
- まぶしい
- 反射
- 希望
- ここちよい
- 影
- 直線
- 花火

- きらきら
- ぴかぴか
- 雷
- ロウソクの火
- 電気
- ネット回線
- 赤外線
- 紫外線
- 星
- 月

What is light? the sun, warmth, bright, reflection, hope, comfortable, shadows, lines, fireworks, glitter, shiny, fire lightning, candles, electricity, internet access, infrared rays, ultraviolet rays, stars, the moon.

Table 1
Dialogues
produced
in thematic
brainstorming

4–3. GROUP INQUIRY WHILE OUTDOORS

Throughout the following steps, we went outdoors and walked freely, and the students tried to feel sound, wind and light (Figure 1). In the beginning, I heard the voices of students saying that they could not feel them only by observing. They picked up different objects, and were better able to feel and recognize the sound, wind and light. At times, I gave non-direct suggestions, helping them to become aware of phenomena from new viewpoints in order to extend their sensory exploration and experiences. Some of the students sat down and exchanged what they were able to feel with each other. Such a sensory dialogue and reflection brought about new perspectives and discoveries (Figure 2). Later, the students came back to the seminar room and drew pictures using pencils, and they wrote comments about what they felt. This was a collaborative inquiry while outdoors. Following this, the first lesson was finished.

Figure 1
Feel and recognize wind, sound and light as new encounters

*Figure 2
Ongoing sensory
dialogue and
reflection*

5. LESSON 2: PAINTING AND GENERATIVE TALK SESSION

I began by informing the students about the day's lesson plan. The first half of the lesson was to paint a picture using watercolors, based on the inquiry and discoveries from the previous lesson (Figure 3). The latter half was to show each picture, discuss it, generate new ideas and insight, and expand the images of the theme with the group members.

*Figure 3
Paint a picture
using watercolors*

5−1. GROUP INQUIRY TO GENERATE NEW IDEAS

The pictures were mounted on a larger paper by each group. At that time I noticed that some of the students believed their task was completely finished, not understanding the full meaning of this activity. By presenting their pictures and talking together, it was a way to generate new ideas and insight, and expand their thinking about the three themes. This was a collaborative inquiry and learning process.

In hindsight, I do not think my instructions were detailed enough for them. This was not the first time for them to try individual self-expressive painting, but the first time for them to try sensory inquiry through art. They have experienced self expression many times in past. However, to feel, recognize, express and represent an invisible phenomenon by using art in a collaborative situation as a method of enquiry (class-based research) was a new experience for them. Therefore, I added advice for them to talk and write comments based on what they felt, and to paint pictures about what impressed them (Figure 4).

Figure 4
Talk about light,
write additional
comments,
and generate
new ideas

5–2. TURNING POINT IN THIS INQUIRY

After observing the students for some time as they wrote comments in a sketchbook, and felt that each picture was expressed, I watched their representations begin to appear on the mounted paper. However, the development of ideas and new images, and the recording and writing process of this current collaborative generation did not appear. Therefore, when I felt it was necessary to mention this, one of the students was aware that it was necessary to talk and generate new ideas and expand images creatively, that it was not just an activity based on arts as a method for inquiry and integration of multiple realities of a phenomenon. Thanks to the awareness of the student, discussions began to deepen in these groups.

6. LESSON 3: PRESENTAION

6–1. DIFFICULTIES FOR PRESENTATION AND ARTS–BASED INQUIRY

At the beginning of class, I informed the students of the day's lesson plan and they started preparation for their presentations. Typically in formal education, most Japanese people do not actively talk. Expressing their own opinion freely under a formal situation is highly unusual, and students often experience anxiety as a result. This is one of the most difficult aspects of implementing collaborative inquiry and arts-based inquiry within teacher training programs and within the field of education overall in Japan.

According to Prosser and Burke (2008), in image-based education, remembering concept mapping, important terms, linking words, explanation, discussion, and activities is necessary. Arts and image-based approaches facilitate children's sensory inquiry, help them develop and expand new ideas, and generate

embodied sensory knowledge. However, it is indispensable to create an environment where they are able to talk more actively without constraint. For this reason, I arranged the presentation space informally, with stools scattered irregularly, resulting in a small presentation space in which the presentations could begin.

6-2. PRESENTATION OF "SOUND"

The presenter explained the inquiry of sound that they felt and recognized, and processed the inquiry by talking with group members (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Presentation
of "Sound"

Descriptions on the mounted paper are as follows (for greater detail see Figure 6 below):

- Sound has various forms and colors; it relates to feelings and style of speaking.

- The sounds made by walking and running are different.

- Various sounds of footsteps depend on the condition of the ground.

- We can hear various sounds in the wind.

- The sound is different depending
  on the intensity of the wind.

- How can you hear the sound of ants?

- What is the sound of birds? Where do birds come from?

- Construction work uses a lot of tools
  and makes various sounds.

- Sounds heard are different for each person,
  even if they listen to the same sound.

Figure 6
Inquiry for sound

This group generated new sensory discoveries. They listened and imagined sounds from different perspectives including nonhuman ones, such as from ants and birds. By walking, they were aware of the difference in sound caused by behavior and the conditions of the ground. By walking and remaining outdoors, they were able to recognize the different sounds caused by people, their interactions and ways of communication. Through this activity, they discovered that the wind conveyed sounds

and that there were various kinds of wind. In addition, they explored how to express and represent the sound with abstract forms and color variations in their watercolor paintings.

6-3. PRESENTATION OF "WIND"

A presenter explains their inquiry including what they felt and recognized about wind, and the inquiry process of talking with group members (Figure 7).

The description on the mounted paper is as follows (see Figure 8 below):

Spring

Flowers and trees swaying in the wind. "Soyo-soyo" (An imitative word of wind). The smell of the wind. Hair swaying in the wind (visible). I feel good, warm and cool. A fluff of a flower swaying in the wind (visible).

Summer

A yacht swaying in the wind. Images of wind associated with videos or picture books that they have seen. Flowers swaying in the prairie (imagination). Wind generated intentionally. Blowing out a candle (experience).

Sound of the wind in four seasons

"Sawa-sawa" (An imitative word of wind). Refreshing (spring), "Zawa-Zawa" (An imitative word of wind) is noisy (summer). "Kasa-Kasa" (An imitative word of wind) is shade (autumn), "Pyu-pyu", "Hyuru-n", "Byu-Byu" Blizzard (An imitative word of wind) are the sounds of winter.

Seasonal colors of wind

Spring is pink, summer is light blue, autumn is orange and brown and winter is white. The color of wind is transparent, but these images and impressions of the seasonal winds allow us to give them color.

*Figure 8
Inquiry for wind*

These group members generated new sensory discoveries. They felt the wind swaying flowers and hair. They recognized wind as a visible phenomenon and created a 'made-visible' (visual) category. Through the affect and smell of swaying in the wind, they experienced the characteristics of spring. However, they also imagined wind apart from the here and now. The image of a yacht swaying was conjured, not from first hand experience here in the present exercise, but recalled from the videos, movies and picture books they have seen. Moreover, they were able to imagine other kinds of wind that could be generated intentionally, such as blowing out a candle. Lastly, they talked about onomatopoeias, and imitations of the sound of wind according to seasonal images. They created visible categories and images which they experience in their minds.

6-4. PRESENTATION OF "LIGHT"

Below, a presenter explains their inquiry of what they felt and recognized about light, and the inquiry process of talking with group members (Figure 9).

Figure 9
Presentation
of "Light"

The description on the mounted paper is as follows (Figure 10):

- Arms sunburn when exposed to sunshine. Skin color changes. What is the state of the skin under the watch? Is the watch sunburnt too?

- Generated question : What is included in sunlight ?

- A Car during a rainy night . The car`s head lights reflected off a wet road in the rain.

- Generated question: Light is reflected because there is water. Does water reflect it on days when it is fine?

- A leaf seems to emit light, so I looked at a green leaf`s white light. Much of gathered light becomes the reflection of white light.

- Generated question: I see a white light. Where does the color green go to?

- Even in the same green, there is variety to the color depending on the condition of light. There is variety of greens.

- Generated question: On a rainy day, the variety of the greens of the leaf increases. What should I do to make the same green?

- There are shadows because there is light. What kind of shape do I have?

- Generated question: Are my shadow and I the same size?

- Plan of next activity: Compare yourself to your shadow.

- The form of shadow will change according to the time and movement of the sun.

- Generated question: Does a shadow always appear in the same direction in the same place? What do children think about this?

- How does the shade darken more?

- Plan for the next activity: Let's change the color of the light using a cellophane sheet. It is possible to change the color of the shadow.

Figure 10
Inquiry for light

Group members experienced new sensory discoveries. They felt and recognized the phenomenon of light in/as sunlight. They generated some sophisticated questions and planned subsequent activities. A student felt hotness on her arm, and focused on her watch. Another student imagined a car on a rainy night. She expanded the relationship of light and water into the concept of reflection. Of course, it was not an experience in the here and now, but she has memories of such a situation.

Similarly, a series of discoveries regarding shadows came from her experimental inquiry. She observed and attempted to discover new perspectives about light, and generate questions herself. The process of inquiry was carried out by the student`s feelings and thoughts. The generation of many questions and images for the next plan of activities was characteristic of this group. One of the students noticed that it was necessary to actively talk with others to generate new ideas as well as to expand images

creatively. These elements enabled group members to actively generate new insights. These are crucial elements for not only arts-based approaches, but also child-centered methodologies (Prosser & Burke 2008) in early childhood education.

The inquiry was concerned with the alteration of light, color and shadow to generate interactional perspectives exchange. It produced an emergence of phenomena and tells us about the dynamic relationship between humans and the natural environment.

7. CONSIDERATION

7-1. WHAT PROMOTES AN ARTS-BASED INQUIRY

Before the lesson, the students had no idea of an arts-based approach. In the outdoor activity in lesson one, they said that it was difficult to feel and understand the activitiy. Most of them picked up a phenomenon that everybody could feel and recognize similarly and easily. The state of such a student means that what they are seeing is not what they are directly feeling and perceiving, but preconceived images and knowledge. However, they gradually began to feel more comfortable and became more sensory rich, discovering the multiple and pluralistic realities of a phenomenon by honing their senses and concentrating on observation and drawing.

Above all, what moved them into more sophisticated sensory inquiries were the effects of embodied behavior and perceptual transformation, including walking on the ground in various conditions. While walking, the students came to consciousness, observed calmly, sat down and talked with each other, exchanged ideas and changed eye levels. They moved closer to objects, ants, flowers, stone, leaves. Awareness of one`s own body and a sunburned arm opened up subjective and sensitive perceptions.

The process and discovery were beyond their expectations. However, they steadily came to feel rich, recognizing the pluralistic aspects of phenomena and their realities. They came to face the phenomena in a manner of phenomenological reduction (Husserl 1936) and eventually, they inquired collaboratively and experimentally by using their own bodily and sensory tools in exploration resulting in what Kujiraoka has called clinical reduction (1999, 2013).

Such a transformation of body and mind in a sensory dialogue is experienced not only as being reflective, but as a more deeply and sensorily transactional experience (Minami 2006). It is connected to a rich sensory and imaginatively embodying experience. One example of this is the member of the "sound" group who attempted to express and represent various winds by using various abstract forms and colors. Through the processes, they tried to deconstruct the preconceptions of the popularized forms of expression and representation. They acquired flexibility and enrichment through bodily and sensory inquiry by way of expression and representation, based on arts-based inquiry.

Through bodily and behavioral contact, the transformation of perspectives, and the deep and basic observations by drawing and painting led them to new perspectives and encounters to different phenomena. The effectiveness of such a basic arts practice was shown in the arts-based program of ELC (Deans 2012, 2013) and my observatory research there.

7–2. COLLABORATIVE ART WORK AND GENERATIVE DIALOGUE

In these lessons, I found the greatest difficulty in communication with others, especially when concerning matters of the internal world. Talking with others about themes based on subjective feelings and understanding is very difficult for Japanese in formal situations. In another of my classes, some of the students were sometimes puzzled and could not deal with another's different

feelings and opinions, or reply to open-ended questions. We must maintain enough diversity in not just today`s artwork and education, but also its various social practices. This has become essential to the methods of constructing new knowledge through collaborative inquiry. If we want to see beyond one reality and the usual limits of our own perspectives, collaborative work and generative dialogue are powerful methods. Arts-based inquiry facilitates this very effectively.

In lesson one, some of the students sat down and exchanged discoveries. They developed mental images of sound from the standpoint of ants in collaborative inquiry work. In lesson two, they talked about the theme and wrote down keywords and comments. This generated new ideas, expanding into new questions and plans for the next activities. Through this process, they acquired practical and embodied knowledge of what to do when they encounter an unknown theme and the undiscovered multiple realities in the life-world.

8. CONCLUSION: KNOWLEDGE FOR METHODOLOGIES

Through this research, I explored a few crucial hypotheses as follow. An arts-based approach is rooted in a basic understanding of arts practices. The approaches I used consisted of natural observations while walking and painting using materials which are commonly supplied. It is a matter of the collaboration and the transformation of students through arts-based inquiry, rather than a matter of sophisticated artistic or expressive techniques. Nevertheless, in the process of inquiry, expression and representation take on an enriched quality.

The students felt and understood the phenomena they encountered through bodily perception and positional transition. They generated new understandings of phenomena

via exchange and dialogue about their impressions and the viewpoints of others. The quality of an arts-based approach is represented in both the process of collaborative inquiry works and generated dialogue mediated by basic artworks. It is necessary for arts-based approaches to contain both a bodily and behavioral approach. Moving and feeling within the bodily experience, subjective perception and affection and natural observation and painting with talking and sensory dialogue are important processes for arts-based approaches. The inquiry leads them to encounter other aspects of the phenomena encountered, and multiple realities. Arts-based approaches are not simply skills in the arts, but also embodiment activities. They are the exploration of the life-world as an unknown in our daily lives. The arts-based approach is a conceptual and practical methodology for this exploration.

This case study gives me a scaffold with which to practice arts-based approaches. However, deeper understandings and more rigourous training practices are necessary to introduce these approaches into early childhood education in Japan. An accumulation of case studies will help clarify and construct more effective context-specific approaches for us in the near future. A study of an arts-based approach still offers Japanese researchers many rich possibilities.

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