

International Workshop

【Explaining the Point】

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In Japan, the relationship between Universities (Teacher Education Providers) and Local Board of Education (LBE) is highly recommended. However, there are not so many good examples of the relation, since there are too many providers in Japan under the 'Open System' and LBEs tend to be difficult to arrange the relationship with nearby universities.

At this point, I would like to make a small presentation about TGU's program named 'Gateway for Teaching Profession' from 2000 students. This program has been organized with 4 municipal LBEs and TGU invites many local teachers as 'guest lectures'. In addition, students of this program have to go to nearby schools for observation.

【From a Chinese Experience】

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The Teacher Professional Practice and Its Effects on Student Achievement in China
The professional practice of teachers has a critical relationship with students' achievement. In order to examine the state quo of professional practice of Chinese teachers and its effect upon student mathematics achievement, we conducted a survey study in 5 Chinese cities which involved around 600 teachers and 5000 students. All the teachers finished teacher questionnaire while students were asked to take a mathematics exam. The questionnaire and test paper were developed in advance based on the PISA test items and background questionnaire as well as the feature of teacher education in China.

In teacher questionnaire, we defined professional practice as four kinds of activities: teachers' lesson planning, training received, peer observation and review of teaching, participation in teaching and learning research. Data shows that the picture of the developmental patterns of teacher professional practice varies in different types of schools (suburban vs. urban; key, ordinary vs. inferior) and cities. Besides, the results of HLM analysis shows that, when controlling variables including student background and teacher background, the frequency of teachers' lesson planning (individual planning, collective planning, mentored or expert-guided planning) has a positive effect on students' mathematics while teachers' approval of general training on curricula and instruction show no significant relationship with students' achievement.

School-University Partnership on Teacher Education - in Japanese Case

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1. Teacher Education and School-University Partnership: outline and political issues

1-1 'School-University Partnership' as a Political Issue

In Japan, close relationship between schools and university for teacher education (Initial Teacher Training Providers = ITT Providers) has been required mainly as a way to strengthen teachers' 'practical competency'. Especially, after 1980s when new types of school affairs so-called 'escape from learning' (such as bullying, truancy, etc.) has become serious, more requirements for teachers' 'practical competency' for students' behaviour and classroom managements than for teaching itself. "On the policies for developing teachers' total competency throughout the teachers' career", a report of Central Council of Education on August 28th 2012, has pointed that 'the relationship and collaboration between universities and local boards of education' is 'crucial for supporting teacher education and teachers' continuous learning'. On the other hand, relationship between universities and schools for collaborative research is not so active except a few examples at attached schools.

1-2 Local Board of Education and 'Universities for Teacher Training'

There are two types of ITT Providers in Japan. One of them is so-called 'Universities and Faculties for Teacher Training', most of which used to be Normal Schools. The other type is optional courses provided by various universities. Almost all prefectures in Japan has one former one, and easy to make relationship with local boards of education (LBE). Prefectural level LBEs in Japan usually have strong power over recruitments, in-service training, and personnel matters of municipal school teachers, so the arrangements of teaching practice among municipal schools are made by prefectural level LBEs.

Thus many local principal cities in Japan have samples of close relationship between universities and LBEs. LBEs usually arrange more chances for prospective teachers to make commitments to municipal schools other than required 'teaching practice' (3 to 5 credits, according to the types of the teachers' licenses), while universities usually provides some in-service training for local teachers.

1-3 Influences of ‘Open System’

As mentioned above, minimum requirement of ‘teaching practice’ to get teachers’ licenses in Japan is not so high level. This is because of expansion of higher education in Japan under the ‘Open System’. It is difficult in Japan to require long term teaching practice for more than 100,000 (sometimes 200,000) prospective teachers’ license holders of 600 universities. So most of ITT Providers in Japan arrange their pre-service teacher education curricula with various kinds of experiences in schools besides the required teaching practices, such as ‘teaching assistant’, ‘school supporter volunteers’, and so on. One example can be shown below as TGU’s program of ‘gateway for teaching profession’.

2. An Attempt of TGU: a subject for freshmen “gateway for teacher profession”

2-1 Backgrounds

In TGU, a subject ‘gateway for teacher profession’ is set up for freshmen after 2000 as an introduction of the whole TGU pre-service teacher education curricula. All ‘Teacher Training Course’ students (who are required to get some teachers’ license for graduation) and some ‘Liberal Arts Course’ (in which teachers’ licenses are optional) students who want to get the license (total approximately 1,000 students every year) are obliged to engage the ‘gateway for teacher profession’ program before they proceed to other programme including teaching practice.

In 1998, Teaching Personnel Certification Act in Japan has been amended and new subject about ‘teaching profession and teacher identity’ (2 credits) has been newly required. As this new subject has been recommended to be set up by close relationship between each universities and LBEs, TGU has renewed the curricula with ‘gateway for teaching profession’ with collaboration among 4 LBEs of nearby local municipalities – Cities of Koganei, Kodaira, Kokubunji and Mitaka. In addition, TGU undergraduate curricula have had some programme including school observation before then.

2-2 Structure and Contents

‘Gateway for teaching profession’ has been set up in autumn semester (from October to next March) of 1st year students. From 1st to 10th weeks of the program, lectures in classroom are mainly provided for students. At the beginning, lectures about the status of teachers, license and certification system, teachers’ roles in school management and so on are given by university professors with academic education major. Then four lectures are given by nearby municipal school teachers, under the

LBEs' arrangements of four neighbour cities. Primary school teachers usually give their lectures to students in primary education course, while junior high school teachers usually give their lectures to students in secondary education course.

After the four lectures, university professors again make lecture for summing up and orientation for 'school observation' and then, usually on February, students observe a assigned school all the day – from the morning to the end of the classes. Students are basically assigned to observe school that teachers who have given them lectures are working. After the 'school observation', students are required to finish their reports and reflection of "The Record of 'the gateway for teaching profession'" and university professors make evaluation for credits.

2-3 'Real' Lectures by In-service Teachers in Neighbourhoods

As mentioned above, four lectures of this program are given by local teachers from neighbour cities. These lectures usually start on late afternoon (4th or 5th periods) when local teachers can come to TGU after they finished their teaching jobs at schools. TGU asks them to make lectures based on general guideline with the contents in syllabus - school managements, teaching subjects, non-teaching jobs and in-service training for teachers. Actually, the managements of the program are slightly different among four LBEs. From some city, only principal comes to TGU and gives four lectures, while four different teachers – such as principal, vice principal, middle-leader teacher and young teacher come to TGU every week.

The most important points of these lectures from neighbour teachers are their 'realities'. After some lectures by university professors about school management system in Japan (e.g. divided tasks for each teacher in a school), a teacher comes to TGU and talks what she/he is doing in school, such as classroom management, leading students' behaviour, after school activities, various meetings, PTA and so on. These lectures with plenty of realities grow solid images among students for becoming real 'teachers'. When young teacher with less experience talks her/his own difficulties and old principal about to retire talks with rich reflection throughout her/his career as a teacher, students can image their own career.

2-4 Effects of 'School Observation'

After these lectures, students participate in one-day school observation at municipal primary/junior high school near TGU. Time table of the school observation day is as follows.

At B Junior High School of A city

9:30am	Meeting place: main entrance
9:50am – 10:40am	Guidance and orientation (at meeting room with Principal, V/P)
10:50am – 11:40am	Class observation (3 rd period)
11:50am – 12:40pm	Class observation (4 th period)
12:40pm – 13:30pm	Lunch break
13:35pm – 14:25pm	Class observation (5 th period)
14:35pm – 15:25pm	Discussion and reflection
15:30pm	Closing meeting

Some students participate in after school activities

The school observation is a chance to change students' points of view from 'school where we learn' to 'school where we teach or work'. In addition, students can have a chance to experience to see 'school as an organization' where teachers and non-teaching staffs collaborate, besides they have some class observation and consideration. In their reports of post-observation reflection in "The Record of 'the gateway for teaching profession'", we can find a lot of descriptions that show students' progress from mere longing for teachers to solid motivation to be good teachers. And, since students could get some connections with nearby schools at 1st year, some of them continuously engage school activities as volunteer supporters or teaching assistants.

2-5 Future Issues and Challenges

However, 'the gateway for teaching profession' in TGU also has some challenges, most of which come from the large scale of this university. Every year, TGU invites nearly 100 local teachers from four municipalities. This means not only the needs for numerous procedures but also the difficulties to standardize the lectures. University professors can sometimes give supplementary explanation in their lecture, but common understanding for the program among them is not efficient. Whole curricula management is also an important issue for future, such as the relationship between the 'gateway for teaching profession' and other programme with practical contents.