The Contribution and Influence of Friedrich Froebel's Ideology; the U.S. and Japan

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I. Introduction

Every kindergarten teacher knows the famous name of Friedrich Froebel, and many educators have admitted his great work and many countries' educational ideas have been influenced by his theories since he established the first kindergarten in Germany in 1837. For example, a Japanese researcher, M. Abe(1990) says that Froebel did a great work as a forefather of early childhood education in the world (p.49). A British scholar, Her ford (1905), recommends that people should learn "F's fundamental principles" to implement his practical ideas (p.11). Hailman (1887) who is a translator of "The Education of Man" admires that "Froebel is the Educational Reformer who has done more than all the rest to make valid in education what the Germans call the 'developing method' " (p.5). Harris (1900) who was editor of "Pedagogy of the Kindergarten" admits that "Froebel is the great pioneer and founder of child study as well as of the pedagogic theory of intellectual values" (p.7). American scholars explain that his idea extended far beyond Germany, and the kindergarten movement spread to many places especially in cities (Ross, 1976) (p.7). Weber (1984) says that he seems like "the great organizer." Spodek & Saracho (1991) acknowledge that "his kindergarten has had the longest history and greatest impact on the field of early childhood education" (p.4). In the same way that they recognize his work, it is a fact that Froebel's ideas stimulated many educators in the world, and the contribution of his ideas served as the stimulus to produce a new kindergarten for children.

According to Spodek (1986), Froebel's kindergarten was organized to teach the basic idea of unity through its activities and use of materials called "Gifts" (p.41). From 1818 to 1848, Germany had been pushed by Austria and Russia to acquire more lands. Consequently, these political events caused people to promote the idea of unity. As a result, people advocated liberalism and promoted rationalism for their lives, so that many people went abroad to find freedom. Thus, Froebel's idea, the unity of the individual, nature, God and other people, started under "the national system of political economy" (Passant, 1959).

II. In the case of the U.S.
A. The beginning of the kindergarten in the U.S.

In the case of the U.S., although Margarethe Meyer Schurz opened the first kindergarten in Watertown, Wisconsin in 1856, there were only ten kindergartens in

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the U.S. by 1870. The German population in the U.S. considered these kindergartens a place to educate their children and to maintain their culture and language (Ross, 1976) (p.2). In 1860, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, who directly learned F's ideas, opened a kindergarten in Boston to use "Gifts", and F's ideas were eventually introduced to America. The St. Louis Public Schools in 1873 opened the first public school kindergarten taught by Susan Blow who had already known about F's idea also opened a public training school for kindergarten teachers in St. Louis in 1874. Therefore, not only F's ideas but also teacher training certainly was extended in the U.S. (Ross, pp.12-14).

B. The American kindergarten

However, when "The American Kindergarten" was introduced by Anna Coe, who was a conductor of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, many people who came from abroad believed that the American kindergarten tried to teach reading and writing to children because Coe introduced these new skills in addition to F's ideas. In fact, that reformational idea for teaching was supported by many other American people (Ross, p.9). Probably, many foreign visitors brought this new framework to their countries and gave stimulation of the new educational method for early childhood education to educators because it was a rational way for their society. Vandewalker (1908) analyzes this happening through two characteristic ideas such as "the Period of Introduction" and "the Period of Extension." The Period of Introduction means that the German kindergarten was brought in naturally to the U.S. from 1856 to 1870, and "from 1870 to 1880 or thereabouts... the kindergarten was accepted by Americans as an institution adapted to American conditions and American needs" (p.9). Of course, Peabody was strongly against "the new American Kindergarten" (Ross, p.9) which was the functional institution of society. It is a fact that the number of kindergartens increased from ten to four hundred in 1880 after the Philadelphia Exposition. Especially, people were surprised by the art of Europe; then it was introduced as a part of the school curriculum immediately. Naturally, hand work, songs and games, and nature work and stories were integrated into F's kindergarten and influenced the school education (Vandewalker, pp.214-231). Although F's ideas was recognized by the school teachers, Ross (1976) points out that the American Kindergartens did not consider to make a good environment for teaching nature which is an important idea of Froebel (Ross, p.7). Moreover, the child study movement spread to the educators when Dr. G. Stanley Hall presented an editorial entitled Pedagogical Seminary in 1895 (Vandewalker, 1908) (pp.235). This new child study pointed out that Froebelians did not attach the real observation and educational experimentation to the child (Spodek, 1986) (p.42). Progressive educators mentioned that the child had different stages of development, so that the child should be supported in his growth by the program (Vandewalker, pp.235-236). Therefore, for Froebelians and progressive educators there was a gap of study
between psychology and pedagogy. Thus, Froebel's idea in the U.S. had been reformed by the new political condition which included the social needs of Americans, and people came to their senses to have a more academic emphasis in early childhood programs.

III. In the case of Japan
A. The beginning of the kindergarten in Japan
1. The first public kindergarten in Kyoto

Froebel's ideas were also brought to Japan. According to K. Nakatani (1982), there were two kindergartens established in Kyoto and Tokyo in the 1870's. In Kyoto, the first kindergarten opened at the public elementary school in 1875 because Kyoto was proud of the founding model of the school, and several scholars who had studied abroad suggested that they make the kindergarten (pp.22-27). The school showed three aspects of the kindergarten: the building, the method, and the goal. First, the building was called the playroom which copied the playground in the Germanic region. Second, the educational method used was a copy of "Gifts" with several hundred of the small cubes and picture puzzles made of small pieces of wood. Probably, these materials were copied from "Gifts". Finally, the goal of the kindergarten was that the children should be protected from abuse and educated through their play. These characteristics of the kindergarten were the same in content as F's ideas. The many intellectuals advocated the early childhood education to promote the new kindergarten in Kyoto. People in general were not concerned about children's education in Japan, so they did not send their children to the elementary school. As a result, the first public kindergarten in Kyoto had to be closed in 1877 because people misunderstood the purpose of early childhood education and this resulted in low enrollment.

2. The first national kindergarten in Tokyo

In Tokyo, the first national kindergarten opened at the Tokyo Women's College in 1876 under the new educational system which was copied by France, America, England, Holland, etc. (Nakatani, p.12). Nakatani explains how the kindergarten was established at Tokyo Women's College. First, Dr. David Murray, Foreign Superintendent of Education for Japan, proposed the model of American education for women to the Japanese government. Then, the education board accepted this idea in 1875. Finally, the Empress H.M. encouraged the education of women and gave 5000 yen to support the founding of the kindergarten when she heard about the plans of the Women's College because she said that women's study was an essential need for early childhood education. As a result, the first national kindergarten could open at the Tokyo Women's College in 1876 (p.22-33). The purpose of Tokyo's kindergarten had different characteristics from Kyoto's, because the students were only elite children. For example, there were four differences one must understand in the content goals of the program: 1) to develop
knowledge, 2) to keep a healthy body, 3) to form good human relationships, and 4) to encourage good speech and behavior. Especially, he first and second did not mention that the children should be protected from abuse and educated while they play as Kyoto's had done. The third and fourth had never been part of the kindergarten curriculum before. Moreover, the number of children did not change from 1877 to 1911 (p.43). This fact represents that the kindergarten used to be used only by the high status children (pp.35-45). Of course, the children were taught F's ideas by Klara Zitelman who learned F's theory in Germany and F. Toyoda, a Japanese teacher (p.32). The daily activity was that the children came to the class, formed a line, sang songs, listened to stories or to history, played outdoors, formed a line again, learned "Gifts", danced or exercised, had lunch, played outdoors again, learned "Gifts" again, and went home. They spent about four hours per day at the kindergarten. However, it is not clear how long these activities continued because there were no formal rules as far as the curriculum of the kindergarten until 1881 (p.38). Nakatani points out that the characteristic kindergarten gave an image of isolation from people in general (p.42). Thus, even though the first kindergarten was opened in Kyoto and Tokyo, it had existed only the high status people. In 1881, S. Koizumi reformed the new program of the kindergarten to fit with Japanese children to use materials such as "Gifts", dances, songs, stories and exercises. In addition, the 3R's were added (pp.71-76). With the increase of the number of kindergartens, the government needed to have the rule to control the kindergarten. In 1899, the fundamental program of the kindergarten showed the use of the Gifts, dances, and songs, but their use was less than before. In addition, kindergartens were added to the elementary schools (pp.139-142). In 1926, the kindergarten had the independent law and the content of "Gifts" still existed with dances, songs, stories, and exercises (p.147-149), but the word "Gifts" was gone by this time. In 1948, the U.S. demanded changes in Japanese law, and the kindergarten law was also reformed by the new curriculum because of World War II. The daily activities of the children were outlined and demonstrated by the government. They included: 1) observation, 2) rhythm, 3) rest time, 4) free play, 5) music, 6) stories, 7) drawing, 8) crafts, 9) observation of nature, 10) dramatic play, 11) health education, and 12) yearly events (Nakatani, p.178). Thus, F's ideas in Japan also were reformed by the Japanese political background. Unlike America, F's ideas of dancing, singing, exercising have been in existence since the first kindergarten opened in Japan. Just as many other societies had admired and accepted F's ideas, these principles also helped form the model for the Japanese kindergarten, but they were reformed by the social needs step by step in the same way as the U.S. Likewise, the kindergartens in both countries changed from being offered only to restricted groups to being open to the general public.

B. The Japanese kindergarten
1. The way of the introduction of the F's ideas

In the case of Japan, however, the way of the introduction of F's ideas was different from America. There was no connection between Froebel and Japan, because Japan had kept a national isolation policy until 1868. Therefore, people had to get information for the child study from only hearing or a record of a person's experiences, and books. According to M. Abe (1990), visiting officials and translations of early childhood education texts of Europe were the most important sources of information for the Japanese kindergarten. For example, first, M. Kondo observed the Wien Exposition in 1873 and recorded his experiences which detailed the content, the method, the building, and the Gifts of the Froebelian kindergarten. His book entitled Kosodate-no-maki (The Rearing of the Child) was published in 1875. Second, the Japanese government published Osanango-no-sono (The Kindergarten) translated by S. Kuwata in 1876. This was the first time for Japanese people to understand the Froebelian kindergarten in Japan. Third, Yochien-ki (The Kindergarten) translated by S. Seki, much influenced the introduction of F's ideas in 1876. Finally, S. Seki wrote Yochien-Soritsuho (The Law Making of the Kindergarten) in 1878 and Yochien-no-20 Yugi (the 20 Plays of Gifts) in 1879. As a result, Japan could get away from dependence on introduction from abroad (p.79). Probably, Japanese people wanted to make their own kindergarten which has its own taste because they were involved in reaching out to other modern countries. Another reason was that the Empress H.M. encouraged the education of women. Therefore, they had to make disparate efforts.

H. Koshimizu (Ed.) (1981), Kindai Nippon Josei Taiikushi (the Physical Education History of the Modern Women in Japan), states that after Froebel died, the Froebelian kindergarten blossomed everywhere in the world, and the Japanese government had already investigated the condition of the Western educational system. For example, F. Tanaka who was a member of Iwakura Mission reported Riji-Kotei (The Process of a Successful Direction) in 1871. T. Nakamura wrote an article and made a presentation of "The Summary of the Kindergarten Theory of Mr. Douai" in 1876. Moreover, she explains that both Osanago-no-sono and Yochien-ki were translated from an English book A Practical Guide to the English Kindergarten by Johan and Bertha Ronge, and an American book The Kindergarten: A Manual for the Introduction of Froebel's System of Primary Education into Public Schools and For the Use of Mothers and Private Teachers, NY in 1871, and Moral Culture of Infancy, and Kindergarten Guide with Music for the Plays by Elizabeth P. Peabody and Mrs. Horace Mann (pp.11-12). Thus, F's ideas in Japan had entered through visitors and translators without pioneers such as Margarethe M. Schurz and Elizabeth P. Peabody.

2. The First Japanese Embassy

One of the historical books The First Japanese Embassy by the America-Japan
society (1920), introduces a diary of the first Japanese embassy. According to the diary, when 76 ambassadors reached Washington and Philadelphia in 1860, they were surprised by the modern society of the U.S. and impressed by the school education and music and dance of children, because they had never met such an educational system for the dance or music instruments of piano. Probably, these speculative people made suggestions to help in the formation of Kyoto’s kindergarten. The Department of the Interior in the U.S. (1877) shows that Dr. Murray, Superintendent of Education in Japan, had a presentation about Japan at the International Conference on Education in Philadelphia in 1876. He said that the present system of education in Japan was a new departure made necessary by foreign nations forcing their way into Japan and making it necessary for Japan to become formally a member of the nations of the earth. Content and intercourse with those nations has made necessary a new kind of education (p.43). Therefore, he proposed to F. Tanaka, Vice-minister of the Educational Department of Japan, to construct a new educational system, and Tanaka accepted this idea (p.68). His presentation agreed with Nakatani’s introduction of the kindergarten at Tokyo Women’s College. Therefore, F. Tanaka who was a member of Iwakura Mission learned a lot from the U.S. Probably, he had connections with some official in the first Japanese embassy because Y. Fukuzawa, a member of that embassy, made the first private school in Tokyo in 1869.

3. The Philadelphia Exposition in 1867

Through these historical happenings, the Japanese situation obviously needed to get information from the U.S. for reconstruction of the Japanese society. Especially, the kindergarten teachers did not know how to teach children because nobody had taught children before. H. Koshimizu (1981) says that according to the Yomiuri Newspaper, Nov. 17, 1876, the teachers said that, anyway, it was the first experience for the teachers to teach children; therefore, they had to observe to understand children because they had not ever had rules and levels (pp.12-13). Probably, they were not sure whether F’s ideas were good for Japanese children or not. On the other hand, the different situation in Japan made people have creative ideas for using materials. For example, H. Koshimizu (1981) explains that a few teachers had to make some samples of Gifts for the Philadelphia Exposition in 1867 before opening the first national kindergarten. According to F. Toyoda, in The Guide of Nurture, although F’s ideas were easy, American teachers had made the construction to be more difficult which was not good for children. The teacher should have creative ideas to teach children for their satisfaction and adapt these ideas to fit the child’s needs. As a result, Japanese teachers made new materials such as a tie of chains, play marbles, and a straw work (Japanese straw work, Mosaic straw or Inlaid Japanese Straw Work) (p.13). Thus, these changes and additions to the Gifts before opening the kindergarten represented that they had already made a unique Japanese style of the kindergarten because making these
materials for the Philadelphia Exposition was demanded by the Japanese Education Board. H. Koshimizu (1981) explains that about 41 materials including the Gifts were displayed to introduce Japanese education along with the Japanese education history to the Exposition (p.13). Therefore, we believe that it is doubtful whether the Japanese kindergarten used F's ideas in the same way as Germany and America, because Japan did not have any direct contact with F's kindergarten through educational pioneers. F. Toyoda criticized America's version of F's Materials since the Japanese kindergarten teachers had already followed the American version of F's kindergarten ideas and reformed them to fit Japanese children for the first national kindergarten in Japan. In addition, the Japanese society only wanted to adopt foreign civilization in order to become as powerful as other nations. Therefore, their understanding of unity through the Gifts was a different conception from both Germany and America.

C. The characteristic of the Japanese kindergarten

1. Music

There were several examples of the different ways used to understand F's ideas such as music and exercise. H. Koshimizu (1981) explains that there were many music scores which were used in teaching methods in English such as "Windmill and Water-wheel" (Figure 1) by Peabody in *Culture of Infancy and Kindergarten*

![Figure 1. The original song of "Windmill and Water-wheel"](image-url)
Guide in 1877. However, the teachers could not teach music to children even though they could translate songs because there was only "Japanese Music" in Japan. Consequently, people could not read music scores and sing songs. For example, the original song of "Windmill and Water-wheel" was arranged to a black ink score (Figure 2) by a "Japanese musician." Then, it was arranged to a normal music score (Figure 3) by S. Izawa who had learned music in the U.S. before opening the kindergarten. After he came back to Japan in 1878, the Japanese school songs had moved to the style and written form of Western music (pp.17-21). Moreover, in 1880, a musical educator, Luther Whiting Mason, who was a teacher of S. Izawa in the U.S., came to Japan for the music department of the Japanese Education Board. He used to play a piano and a violin to play with children (p.28). Thus, music of the Japanese kindergarten had been influenced by translated songs from English. Unfortunately, they could not teach songs to
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2. Exercise

Regarding exercise, it was different from F’s ideas because the Japanese Education Board had believed in the three parts of education: intellectual, moral, and physical education (Y. Kishino, 1986) (p.228). Y. Kishino (1986) explains that when F. Tanaka went to the U.S., the Japanese Government had already invited a specialist of physical education from the University of Amherst which established the first physical education department in the U.S. In 1878, the specialist, Dr. George Adams Leland, came to Japan to teach exercise, and this also was taught to children. This exercise included free exercises, using bells, and bar, and heavy gymnastics (pp.228-229). According to Dr. Leland by Y. Imamura (1968), Dr. Leland had used the method of “the New Gymnastics of Dr. Lewis” which had a large influence in the U.S. in 1860, and they had been impressed by the performance of the children’s dance. The diary of The First Japanese Embassy tells that “their performance was a very effective and amusing one. —At one time the girls did what seemed to be a kind of dance with sticks (Bar-bell drill). We were told that this kind of game has only recently been introduced” (pp.69-70). This diary obviously verifies that the first embassy had connections with the new Japanese education. Therefore, it could be inferred that some of the first embassies recommended this exercise for the new Japanese education before they
knew of F’s kindergarten. Lewis (1864) recommends that this exercise is good for everyone from children to adults (p.5). He also says that “men and women of enterprise and industry, will find in this field health, usefulness, and large profit” (p.269). According to Y. Imamura (1968), this exercise had been spreading since 1820 in Germany (p.72). Therefore, even though the literature regarding this exercise was not mentioned in F’s ideas, exercise naturally had been included in the German spirit of unity. Therefore, the importance of exercise naturally filled Froebel’s mind and was part of his idea. Japan’s strong focus on exercise came from another source, but dovetailed nicely with F’s ideas.

IV. Conclusion

Since the first kindergarten opened in Kyoto and Tokyo in the 1870’s, it is doubtful how much F’s ideas directly contributed to make the Japanese kindergarten because there were several different ideas from the American Froebelian kindergarten such as reforming Gifts in 1876, misunderstanding music, and advocating exercise. K. Nakatani (1982) says that at the beginning of the national kindergarten establishment, people mostly learned F’s system, and it seemed that they accepted F’s ideas (p.71). In fact, this kindergarten was one of the models in Japan and influenced a lot of other kindergartens. However, under the new Japanese situation, the new education did not have time to examine social needs even though Japan had not had any schools before. Therefore, the Japanese education had to start with gathering information. Especially, the first kindergarten was supported by the Empress H.M. In this time, her status was a kind of God. Probably, giving 5000 yen for the founding of a kindergarten was a kind of an appeal for foreign countries to recognize Japanese power, and Japanese people also admitted that Japan was an undeveloped country. Therefore, the Japanese kindergarten was opened by the government to make a face for the new Japanese society. We believe that if the Empress H.M. had understood F’s Spirit in the song “the kindertarten” (Figure 4) as follows:

The Kindergarten

The kindergarten is the place where pretty flowers bloom
and trees and bushes glow—here in the shining sun.
The birds they sing all filled with joy out to the fields and lands.
As we rejoice with all our heart and take each others hands.
And merrily we dance around on meadows green and lush.
No child should be excluded here to make the playing fun.
And after play and joy we find the time for work as well.
Oh, God, we children want to thank for all your favors now.

(Fröbel’sche Erziehungsmethode, Berlin, 1866)
Der Kindergarten.

Die Vögel singen hier voll Lust
Hinein in's weite Land,
Wir jubeln auch aus holler Brust
Und reichen uns die Hand,

Und tanzen fröhlich Ringsreih'n
Auf grünem Wiesengrund;
Kein Kind soll ausgeschlossen sein,
So wird die Reihe bunt.

Nach Spiel und Freude finden wir
Zur Arbeit auch Gebot.
O Gott, wir Kinder danken dir
Für alle deine Güte.

Figure 4. The original song of “The Kindergarten” of Froebel
the Japanese kindergarten would have changed to other ways. We believe that the meaning of this song “the kindergarten” is one of the definitions of early childhood education. It should be maintained for children anytime and everywhere, because “no child should be excluded” there. Since the first kindergarten opened in Kyoto and Tokyo in the 1870’s, F’s kindergarten has not existed in Japan, but many of F’s ideas have spread to Japan and F’s spirit of “the kindergarten” has been existing in many places in Japan because “the kindergarten” captures an eternal truth present in the human spirit.

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幼稚園創設期におけるフレーベルの波及と諸相
―アメリカと日本―

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ドイツの幼児教育者、フリードリヒ・フレーベルの偉業と名声は、今日まで世界各国に伝えられている。しかし、フレーベル思想やフレーベル幼稚園の紹介、受容の図式は様々である。例えば、アメリカと日本とは異なる図式がある。

本稿では、アメリカと日本を事例にして、フレーベルの思想や幼稚園の紹介ならびに受容の経路、目的、背景等について、その図式の諸相を明らかにする。

アメリカにおいては、1856年にウィスコンシン州オーガスタウンに、最初の幼稚園が設立された。ドイツ移民者の子弟を対象にした、ドイツ語ならびにドイツ文化の教育を主目的とした「フレーベル幼稚園」であった。その後、フレーベル幼稚園は開放され、アメリカ社会のニーズに応じながら教育内容の変換を行い、「アメリカ幼稚園」として成長していた。

日本においては、1875年に京都に最初の公立幼稚園が設立されたが、一年で廃園になる。1876年に東京女子師範学校に幼稚園が設立された。近代国家の建設に必要な教育制度の導入に合わせて、その後各地に幼稚園が設立された。教育内容においては、フレーベルの思想や幼稚園に影響されるところも多い。しかし、フレーベル幼稚園をモデルとした幼稚園の成長過程を経ることはなかった。日本的社会背景の中で、独自の幼稚園の概念を形成しながら、「日本の幼稚園」として成長していった。