

## The development of emotion and imagination in teacher-supported collective drama play


Yuki FUJINO  
(Hokkaido University, JAPAN)  
E-mail: fuchan@edu.hokudai.ac.jp



## Background and Purpose of This Study



- Drama play is an aesthetic, playful and important activity for preschool children. Through drama play, children experience rich emotions and develop their imagination.
- In Japan, although numerous attempts of drama play have been made by preschool or kindergarten teacher, little attention has been given to the point in pedagogy or developmental psychology.
- This study is concerned with what develops through in collective drama play. The drama play we deal with in this study is similar to G.Lindqvist's "playworld" in Sweden, in a point that teachers(or adults) co-construct and support this drama play.

- 
- L.S. Vygotsky said " It is a mistake to think that children have rich imagination by nature. Imagination is one of the higher mental function. Imagination develops, as children get a variety of cultural experience". In short, children are able to acquire rich imagination through play activity which is mediated by adults and cultural artifacts.
  - Especially in young children, imagination is closely related to their emotion. It is an important purpose to describe the relationship between both them.
  - The purpose of this study is to analyze a structure of drama play and describe a relationship between imagination and emotion, by focusing on teacher - children relationship in drama play.

## Research Method



- The method on this study was based on :
  - \* L.S.Vygotsky's "Functional methods with double stimulation"(1978)  
( Stimulus-response situation)  
...This method is aimed at studying how people solve problems with new tools, and making the internal processes clear.
  - \* D.B.Elikonin's "Formative-experimental method"(1978)
  - \* G.Lindqvist's "Creating a *Playworld*"(1995)  
...*Playworld* is a shard culture (context). Both adults and children develop play and interpret the world.

- We in KODOMO project introduced two types of teacher-supported collective drama play into after-school program of a preschool.

### \*Type<1>: Exploration into another world

Participants: 14 children(3-6 years old), 7 adults

Story: H.G.Wells "The First Men in the Moon"

Context of Play: One day, two researchers of a space laboratory visit to the preschool. The children explore into the moon with them.

### \*Type<2>: Interpretation of a folktale

Participants: 15 children(3-6 years old), 8adults

Story: S.Sato "The Small World Nobody Knows"

Context of Play: One day, the children find out one of small shoes(only 3cm length) on the trunk of a tree.

## Results



- How did the children experience the "playworld"?
  - \*Type<1>: Exploration into another world  
When two researchers visited to the preschool and asked the children to explore into the moon, some of them were glad at the chance, but the other were depressed with fear.  
Before a departure to the moon, they have got some knowledge about the moon and prepared for exploration. Through those activities, they talked about and imagined the unknown world.  
The children explored into the moon with peer consciousness. They behaved or spoke as a member of a researching team.



**\*Type<2>: Interpretation of a folktale**

At the beginning of the play, an old woman narrated a folktale about the fairy who lived in a woods (they were called "Korobokgur") to the children. They listened to her talk with deep interest.

Next week, when the children went out to the park, they run up to some trees and looked for "Korobokgur". Some of them put a number of pinecones on a snowfield to meet with the fairy. It was the children's original idea.

They found out one of small shoes on the trunk of a tree. It was only 3cm length. They excitedly imagined a relationship between this shoe and Korobokgur.



- What was the role of adults in the "playworld"?

**\*Type<1>: Exploration into another world**

Adults had a role of invoking the children's emotion and imagination, by embodying mysterious atmosphere of the moon and giving some concrete knowledge about it.

**\*Type<2>: Interpretation of a folktale**

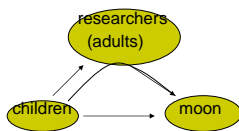
Adults gave the children some resources(a folktale and a few material clues) to make them rediscover the meaning of their familiar environment.

**\*\*Type<1>and<2>** ...Adults enjoyed drama play with the children and expressed rich emotion.

## Discussion

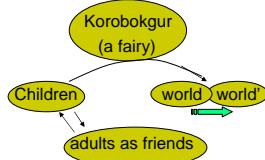
- Type<1>

- \*To talk about shared topic
- \*To know the moon with emotion mediated by researchers



- Type<2>

- \*To re-construct everyday world
- \*To find a new meaning of environment



- In those drama play, adults didn't take a role of a so-called "traditional teacher". They did not teach the children a new concept or something directly, but encountered a new world and learn about a new concept with rich emotion and imagination together. Their attitude to play activity made children grow interest in unknown world. The children talked about the moon or the fairy with imagination, and experienced the *playworld* with various gesture or a delightful surprise.