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## Values Education for Enhancing Self-affirmative Consciousness

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Values Education for Enhancing Self-affirmative Consciousness

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Summary:

Values education aimed at teaching a moral value separately delivers meaning by its lightness, as it frees a decision in life. Choice of a moral value is left to each diverse people and society in this type of values education, as is seen in Japanese moral education. However a lesson turns into clinical moral education based on the needs of people, when values education is combined with self-affirmative consciousness.

Values education lesson aimed at teaching a moral value in intentional education area should be constructed so as to support self-affirmative consciousness, and should be assessed in terms of the depth of self-affirmative consciousness, not only on the basis of whether the value is simply accepted consciously.

The authors organized nine value moral education lessons about sympathy, (7 in Japan 2 in Taiwan), from December 2013 to May 2014, using an enjoyable folk story in order to enhance the self-affirmative consciousness of students. The lessons were identical in terms of teacher, learning material, lesson plan and value. Sympathy, the value of this lesson plan, is defined as thinking from the standpoint of others, accepting others, and reflecting on oneself. Assessment of each lesson employed an association method, using quantitative and qualitative analysis by collecting recalled responses to a cue word, before and after each lesson.

Analyzing the total results of 9 lessons, self-affirmative consciousness increased significantly ( $p < .01$ ), indicating that value education lesson is effective in increasing the self-affirmative consciousness of students. Looking at the factors which increased self-affirmative consciousness in the 9 classes, we can identify: 1) listening attitude; 2)

reaching a definition of sympathy; and 3) self-reflection from the standpoint of a future self. The classes, which showed listening ability by recalling factors of the folk story, and the classes, which found the definition of sympathy, achieved self-affirmative consciousness. The classes, where the function of self-reflection at the end process of the lesson was effective, could achieve self-affirmative consciousness quantitatively and/or qualitatively.

The factor of age-group was small. For example 3rd and 4th grade students in a school situated on an island responded at the end of the lesson with tender (87.5% of students), smiling (75.0%), energetic (50.0%) themselves and increased self-affirmative consciousness (225%). They learned the value of tenderness (increased by 225%), and felt sympathy for the tenderness of the bride (37.5%) in the folk story. The classes which had high self-affirmative consciousness from the beginning, showed no quantitative significant increase of consciousness, but when all 3 factors are significant, they increased self-affirmative consciousness.

The results seem to support the concept of a triangular relationship between listening attitude, value awareness and self-reflection from a future self leading to self-affirmative consciousness. In other words, value learning leads to a self-affirmative personality starting from one's listening attitude. Listening, thinking and enjoying the story, awareness of the value of the lesson and reflection on oneself resulting from that value (i.e. from a future image of oneself), mean that this process seems to encourage students in terms of their moral personality. This triangular hypothesis about moral education lesson could create a framework to enhance self-affirmative consciousness of students.

**Key words: moral education, moral education class, association method, self-affirmative consciousness**

I Introduction -Asian background of moral education lesson  
(Japanese moral education)

A lesson to teach moral values is a simple form of intentional education, which I would like to call here values education<sup>1)</sup>. Teaching a value in a lesson allows a teacher to adopt a safe and obstinate standpoint, because nobody will deny the proposition of the value. Values education stands on the background of universality of values. When there occurs no objection to values, then discussion about values education leads to the direction of the method of education, i.e. aim of the lesson, teaching material and development of the process of the lesson. In this type of moral education lesson, students have a free hand in choosing their attitude in a concrete situation even if they

say yes in a classroom, and may add some recollected experiences from their own daily life to support the teacher. The aim of the lesson becomes the value of respect.

Keeping values in mind, proverbs memorizing and reciting was the first moral education lesson at the beginning of modern education in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century in Japan, emphasizing support of a future life of students. Still now virtue items are prioritized to be taught in a lesson. Now a story highlighting a virtue item is taught as a moral education lesson in Japan. The teacher teaches once a week (as an obligatory part of the curriculum) about the importance of living creatures, greetings, rules, friends, avoiding selfish, telling the truth, respecting old people, father and mother, community; in total 16 items in the case of 1<sup>st</sup> graders of elementary schools.

Moral education lessons in Japan can be called values education. Students learn 16-24 moral values according to the list, throughout the course of study. This type of values education without systematization is shallow, and not based on the personality of students. Moral values in Japan are not integrated with the depth of a personality nor with other subjects. It is a “light” moral education, in which students can principally be free from the instruction of values.

Japanese moral education is now in the process of changing, but the fundamental character will stay unchanged. The Central Council for Education submitted a report about the improvement of the curriculum on moral education on October 21, 2014. It advises the Japanese government to treat moral education lessons in elementary and secondary schools as a special subject, and to introduce authorized textbooks and verbal evaluation of students. The related legislation and the course of study for moral education will be revised next March. Furthermore, textbooks for moral education will be published in two years.

Until now since 1958, when moral education lesson appeared in the school curriculum of elementary and secondary schools once a week, teaching materials for moral education lessons have needed no authorization by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), there is no expert teacher for moral education and there is no evaluation of students in this field. In one word ‘reticence’ is the characteristic of moral education in Japan.

Historically moral education was an important subject with authorized textbooks in the Meiji era from 1880. In the period leading up to World War II, moral education was combined with Japanese History, Geography and Religion (Shintoism), with the Emperor standing at the top. After the end of World War II, GHQ (General Headquarters, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) abandoned these 3 subjects, along with the textbooks. Still now, Japanese public education is secular and religion must not be taught.

The intended change by the Central Council for Education on October, 2014, will

not alter the “light” character of Japanese moral education, because the style of teaching a value in a lesson is to be maintained.

(Taiwanese moral education)

One way to systematize the parallel display of value items is to clarify the core values as is seen in Taiwanese moral education between 1949 and 2000. The Taiwanese government set up a structured moral curriculum with core values, moral assessment and textbooks between 1949 and 2000. The teachers not only taught moral education through the formal curriculum, but also through daily modeling in schools. The titles of moral subjects were "Life and Ethics" (1968-1996) or "Morality and Health" (1996-2001) for elementary schools and "Civic and Moral Education" for high schools.

However when the diversity of Taiwanese society was taken into account, a value itself began to adopt diverse interpretations, removing the safe and obstinate standpoint of a teacher.

Even if the diversity awareness of society was not the only factor, moral education as a separate subject in Taiwan has been removed from the timetable of the Grade 1-9 Curriculum, and combined into the seven other learning areas. Under the Guidelines of the Grade 1-9 Curriculum implemented in primary and junior high schools, moral education is no longer an explicit curriculum item.

There was some criticism because of over-emphasis on moral knowledge and assessment. In 1987, the Taiwanese government declared the end of martial law. Since then Taiwan has moved towards a more liberal, democratic and pluralistic society; Western liberalism and pluralism have merged with mainstream thought.

(Chinese moral education)

The Chinese system seems to organize moral education with the aim of an identity of a child and patriotism to the Communist Party.

Chinese moral education is also in the process of changing, but its fundamental character seems unchanged. A new course of study was introduced at the end of 2011, the compulsory curriculum standards of moral education and social study (or life science) for 2<sup>nd</sup> 011 version were published in January 2012, and the new textbooks in the area of moral education are in the process of editing.

Chinese textbooks for moral education, which are based on the compulsory curriculum standards of moral education and social study (trial version)<sup>2)</sup> of 2002, are systematically combined with geography, history and politics. Consciousness concerning a self is organized as a geographical concentric circle from the standpoint of oneself, and the historical background is described in combination with the

geography China, and emphasizes the history, starting from the humiliating Opium Wars, continuing to the process of relief by the Communist Party. The moral education textbooks of China aim to have an influence on the world view and identity of students. We can call this integrated form a “heavy” moral education. In heavy moral education it is difficult to find free space in the instruction of values and choice of attitudes, without clashing with the systematization of moral education.

The “heavy” moral education also provides teachers with a politically safe and obstinate standpoint on the background to the purpose and system of moral education. The needs of moral education are here rooted in a ruling power.

(Clinical moral education)

Here I would like to propose a form of moral education, which depends on the needs of students.

Values education will be attractive and powerful, when it is focused on pupils' needs. A moral education lesson, which starts from the students and ends with the students clinically, will give meaning to the “light” values education which connects values in order to support students. In other words, when values education is combined with supporting needs of students, the “light” moral education will be transformed into an education dictated by pupils' needs. This kind of lesson can bridge value and students' life. Furthermore, I would like to refer to this necessity-based moral education as “clinical moral education”. “Clinically” means here “according to the needs of students” and clinical moral education involves a step to learn the needs of students, which clarifies the task of education.

In Japanese and Taiwanese education one of the needs of students is the encouragement of their self-affirmative consciousness. Especially Japanese students' self-affirming consciousness is a cause for concern: 9.8% of 397 students aged 13 responded with “foolish” for themselves, and this word was the second most frequent response about <me><sup>3)</sup>. In Tokyo 30% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 31% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders answered negatively to the question about whether they have their own good quality<sup>4)</sup>. Japanese students need to be supported in self-affirmative consciousness by education in general, and through moral education in particular. Needs for self-affirmative consciousness of Japanese students is emphasized in many ways (Kamizono, 2007; Araragi, 1989; Kajita, 2002; Tanaka, 2005; Hitotsubashi- bungeikyoku-shinkokai, 2012; Tokyo Metropolitan Teacher Training Center, 2011).

We propose in this paper a possibility and process of a clinical moral education lesson with the purpose of enhancing self-affirmative consciousness, a basis for morality and as an aim to obtain a clear understanding of a value. Clinical moral education, which supports self-affirmative consciousness of students, will be

meaningful beyond boundaries of countries and cultural areas.

As a clinical moral education lesson beyond boundaries, the authors organized 9 lessons in Japan and Taiwan from December 2013 to May 2014, using an enjoyable folk story of “Farting Bride”<sup>5)</sup> in order to enhance self-affirmative consciousness. The lessons were identical in terms of learning material, lesson plan and teacher, Ko Okazaki. The aim of this lesson is to think differently of another, the bride in the prepared story. The main structure of the lesson plan is as follows: considering how to treat the bride will lead to a widening of the definition of sympathy and tenderness. Furthermore, a new definition of a value will be turned on oneself during the reflecting process of the lesson, which is organized around the consideration of oneself from a future self-image. Listening to an enjoyable story and talking cooperatively between students will lead them to find an affirmative self by a reflection based upon an enriched value awareness of oneself.

As an assessment of each lesson we employed an association method, using quantitative and qualitative analysis by collecting recalled responses to a cue word, before and after each lesson.

(Association method)

Association method<sup>6)</sup> combines fragments of recollection of a group into a map, in order to calculate and visualize collective consciousness. In an association map all response words in total are shown. It shows a collective recall from a cue word in a field. Response words of association are not selected and sorted in the form of sentences, so that all the factors in the mind appear as response words. Moreover, there appear approximately 5 times more response words than written responses to a questionnaire (Kamizono, 2011, pp.141-145). The volume of information is bigger by association within a time-frame of 50 seconds than by responding through sentences in a free answering period.

Free association method by single cue word in this paper draws out the following 4 points from words.

1. all recall of a person, conscious or unconscious
2. social consciousness and private recall, with positive or negative feelings
3. conceptual relations, either grammatical or topical
4. common memory and way of thinking in a cultural area.

A rough sketch of creating an association map by this theory is as follows:

1. Response words resulting from association show the consciousness of students, including knowledge, feeling, memory and thinking.
2. When the intention of a lesson has been accepted into the consciousness of students, words related to that intention will be recalled by students and will appear newly or

increase after the lesson.

3. A word by which many students responded, comes near to a cue word in an association map. The words at the edge, furthest out of the whole circle, indicate a word associated by one person.

The lessons' purpose here was to enhance the self-affirmative consciousness of students. Furthermore, the aim of the lesson was not simply to teach sympathy for another person, but sympathy for oneself should be included in this lesson from the point of view of the clinical purpose. Without accepting oneself and enhancing self-affirmative consciousness, it will be difficult to be sympathetic to others.

## II. Quantitative results of the total moral education lesson

The consciousness of students concerning oneself changed in a positive direction significantly ( $p < .01$ ) in total, as a result of the 9 lessons of "Farting Bride", as is seen in table 1. Table 1 shows the number of positive response words about the cue word <me> <sup>7)</sup> before and after the lesson. The category "positive" increased after the lesson significantly ( $p < .01$ ), and "attributes" decreased significantly ( $p < .01$ ).

This change is interpreted as a result of reflection on one's interior at the end of the lesson, after they had acquired a definition of sympathy and tenderness. Moreover, the students seem to have found these values of sympathy within themselves at the end of the lesson during the process of self-reflection.

Students responded before the lesson about oneself like 'human being', 'life', 'man' and 'woman', which decreased; response words like 'tender', 'important', 'kindness', 'mind', 'happy' and 'spirited' increased to describe themselves, though there was no comment by the teacher about students' selves during the lesson and the rate of change is different for each class.

The result indicates that a moral education lesson is able to change consciousness about oneself in a positive direction. It means we can construct a moral education lesson with the purpose of enhancing self-affirmative consciousness.

Table 1 Total categorical change of 9 lessons concerning <me> of students

category	attribute	positive	negative	body	others	total number of response words
before the lesson	521▲	243▽	64	60	98	986
after the lesson	535▽	415▲	87	60	94	1191

(▲significantly more, ▽significantly less,  $p < .01$ ) n=225

The lessons has also enriched the definition concerning <sympathy>, which was the aim of the lesson, among students significantly in total, as is seen in table 2.



Table 2 Total change of 9 lessons concerning <sympathy>

category	definition	object	others	total number of response words
before the lesson	582▽	222▲	50	854
after the lesson	773▲	198▽	47	1018
(▲significantly more, ▽significantly less, p<.01)				n=225

The response words concerning the cue word <sympathy> changed into the abstract and attitude. Though the increased and decreased words were different in each class, we found the tendencies of decreasing of objects concerning sympathy like ‘friend’, and increasing of abstract definitions like ‘kindness’, ‘tenderness’ and ‘important’; also attitudes ‘help’, ‘help others’ and ‘act’ increased in total.

Moreover, as is seen in the association maps after the lesson (figure 2), students found the definitions about sympathy within themselves as part of their personality.

### III Influencing factors to the results

Analyzing the lessons for self-affirmative consciousness, we can point out a factor of listening, which is measured by the increase of the response words after the lesson concerning the story used in the lesson and discussions between the students from the cue word <bride>. Table 3 shows the results of 9 lessons about the consciousness of <bride>.

Listening to the story and recalling the words used in group discussion, may be the trigger for thinking about values and reflecting on oneself. Table 3 shows the result of recall from the cue word <bride> after the lesson, if the students recalled the words concerning the story and used in the lesson. In fact, in TG6 and A1-6 lessons, where listening was not distinct, could not attain self-affirmative consciousness, nor obtain a significant increase of moral values (table 3).

Table 3 Significant change of listening of 9 schools about <bride> after the lesson

Listening									
school	F2	K3&4	J5	F5	TC5	TG6	N6	G6	A1-6
number of students	n=30	n=8	n=33	n=25	n=27	n=28	n=30	n=30	n=14
increase of the story factors	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	
(*significantly more, p<.05)									n=225

Table 4 Self-affirmative consciousness, listening and values

	school	F2	K3&4	J5	F5	TC5	TG6	N6	G6	A1-6
Self-affirmative consciousness	increase of ...									
	positive consciousness about <me>	**			**					
	increased percentage of positive words									
Listening	the factors about <bride> by the lesson	**	**	**	**	*		**	*	
Value	the definition about <sympathy>								**	
Value	the definition about <tender>		**		*			*	**	

(\*\* significantly more, p<.01, \* significantly more, p<.05) n=225

The classes, in which response words about the story of the bride and discussion between the students were recalled frequently after the lesson, attained the definition of sympathy or tenderness, and/or attained self-affirmative consciousness (F2, K3&4, F5, N6, and G6). Regarding the exception of TC5 the teacher felt that they responded to the unexpected story but did not achieve deep relaxed thinking, and so the ending process of the lesson became spread. Concerning the definition of a value, the concept <tender> seems easier to accept for students than <sympathy> especially for Japanese students, as is significant in 4 classes of Table 4.

Table 5 Increase of positive words about <me> after the lesson

	F2	K3&4	J5	F5	TC5	TG6	N6	G6	A1-6	total
number of respondents	30	8	33	25	27	28	30	30	14	225
positive words										
about <me>										
before the lesson	22	26	43	18	9	31	29	47	18	243
after the lesson	82	44	62	58	10	24	49	61	25	415
increase of positive words										
per respondents	200.0%	225.0%	57.6%	160.0%	3.7%	-25.0%	66.7%	46.7%	50.0%	76.4%

Change in K3&4 is not significant quantitatively relating to the increase of self-affirmative consciousness. This is because the self-affirmative positive consciousness was high from the beginning (325.0% per respondents, before the lesson), though the increase of response words was 225.0% per respondent and became 550.0% after the lesson. Such a high self-affirmative consciousness is rare. The teacher felt the students of this class were tenacious and he could wait and listen to them.

#### IV Qualitative analysis of each moral education lessons

The factor of age-group was small, as is seen in K3&4 and F2 classes. K3&4, from 8 to 10 years old students in an island school, responded at the end of the lesson with ‘tender’ (87.5% of students), ‘smiling’ (75.0%), ‘energetic’ (50.0%) themselves and increased self-affirmative consciousness (225%). They learned the value of tenderness (increased by 225%), and a felt sympathy for the tenderness of the bride (37.5%) in the folk story.

In the case of F2 class, 7-8 years old, they enjoyed the lesson using the “Farting

Bride”. They listened to the story and attained significantly a self-affirmative consciousness. Analyzing each class we found that 30 Japanese 2nd graders reacted keenly to the lesson: they listened to the story and 130.0% students recalled the bride for her flatulence, 176.7% had written more words about the value of thinking of others and their self-affirmative consciousness increased significantly ( $p < .01$ ) to 200.0% per respondent.

As is seen in figure 1, general attributes like ‘human being’ (-23.3% per respondent after the lesson), ‘man’ (-26.7%), and ‘woman’ (-20.0%) were the central part of consciousness of F2 class students before the lesson. These general attributes decreased after the lesson while there was an increase in the aimed value, through responses such as ‘tender’ (+26.7% per respondents after the lesson), ‘think of others’ (+33.3%), ‘important’ (+20.0%), and the remaining ‘human being’ became 4 central elements of consciousness of the students (figure 2). Especially ‘think of others’ appeared newly 33.3%, which is the level, in the case of association, at which almost all the respondents can agree to recalling<sup>8)</sup>. We can suppose that the process of change of the consciousness, according to the process of the lesson plan, that F2 class listened and learned newly the concept of ‘think of others’ as a definition of sympathy and it became a consensus of the class, and they found themselves thinking of others.

They found positivity in themselves, thanks to the construction of the lesson, while they were listening to the story and to each other in a cooperative learning section, as well as reflecting on themselves at the end of the lesson. The increase of words in their thinking sphere was big: the number of kinds of response words increased by 85.7%, the number of all response word increased by 55.6%, and entropy increased by 1.04. It indicates that they thought intensively with diverse and many words during the lesson.







words about <me>. It means that no drastic change occurred concerning the recognition of oneself as the quantitative analysis tells.

Though the volume of change was not big, they found ‘happy’ (+13.3%), ‘tender’ and ‘important’ (+10.0%, respectively) about themselves. As a result, their consciousness shifted in the direction of ‘happy’, ‘tender’, ‘man’ (respectively 16.7% per respondents), ‘cheerful’, ‘humorous’, ‘woman’ (respectively 13.3%). We can interpret the shift as indicating that they found positive qualities in themselves, like ‘happy’ and ‘tender’ as a result of the lesson, and seem to have thought about the relationship between men and women via the story of bride and bridegroom, which did not occur in the age level 7-8 years. Though the quantitative change was small in the reflecting process of the lesson, there occurred a qualitative shift concerning the consciousness of <me> in this class.

**Categorized Association Map**

Date : May 2014                      Module Version 5.01

**G6** (11-12 years old) class After the lesson

Cue Word : <me>(自分)

number of respondents : 30 , number of kinds of response word : 133 , number of all response words : 176 , entropy : 6.86, volume of total association : 25.26

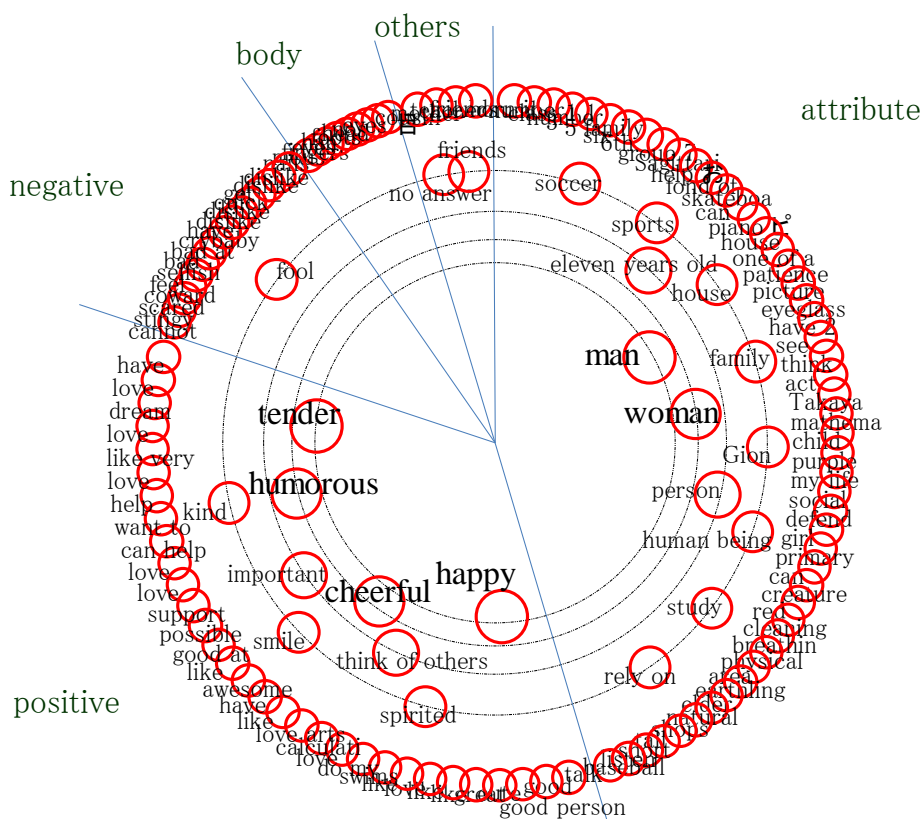


Figure 4 Categorized association map of G6 class about <me> after the lesson

They listened to the story and to each other as is seen in table 4. Furthermore, they found a new definition of sympathy ‘act’ (13.3%, newly appeared after the lesson) together with ‘help’ (10.0%, increased) and ‘tenderness’ (13.3%, increased), and a definition of tenderness ‘friendship’ (16.7%, newly appeared) together with ‘kindness’ (16.7%, increased), ‘sympathy’ and ‘help’ (respectively 13.3%, increased). Their definition of sympathy and tenderness seems to have moved in the direction of act and abstraction. Perhaps they did not combine these two directions in the context of their personality, except tenderness, so that the change of <me> was not big.

The results of 9 lessons in total seem to support a triangular relationship between listening attitude, values awareness and self-affirmative consciousness, though the change of thinking sphere is diverse in each class. The results of 9 moral education lessons create a possibility for light values learning that can achieve a depth capable of enhancing self-affirmative consciousness when it aims to be clinical and construct a lesson according to the triangular process. The process of listening, thinking and enjoying the story, awareness of the values of the lesson and reflection on oneself resulting from those values (i.e. from a future image of oneself), seems to encourage students in terms of cultivating personality. This triangular hypothesis about moral education lesson has the potential to create a process with which to enhance self-affirmative consciousness of students, and so the process for moral education.

The clinical value education is still a “light” moral education, because it encourages a process towards morality but not an instruction of morality. Free space for students remains in the process of the clinical value education. This lightness and free decision for moral behavior will make it possible to go beyond boundaries and create consensus in terms of definition and development of values.

## V Conclusions

1. The organized moral education lesson using a story of the “Farting Bride” could enrich the definition of sympathy and attain the self-affirmative consciousness of students.
2. Values education, which treats each value in a lesson, can be called “light” moral education, but it can be deepened when its purpose is connected to self-affirmative consciousness. Values education, which has a purpose focused on the needs of students, carries the possibility to be carried beyond boundaries, because the needs of students are global.
3. In the analysis of 9 lessons listening and self-reflection were found as main factors, which influence the enrichment of the definition of sympathy and enhance self-affirmative consciousness.



4. Triangular relationships can be supposed: values learning leads to self-affirmative personality, by means of listening and reflection on oneself, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

#### Notes

- 1) The stream of values clarification by L. E. Raths, M. Hermin and H. Kirschenbaum involves a process of explanation of how to organize a moral education lesson and it is not a simple values education.
- 2) In case of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders moral education is combined with life science. “The full time compulsory curriculum standards of moral education and social study (trial version)” is the title of the standard curriculum of moral education.
- 3) Kamizono K. (上藺恒太郎) (2007). 長崎県の教育の課題 自尊感覚を育成する教育を,長崎人権研究所, もやい 長崎人権・学 Vol.53, 2-4
- 4) Tokyo Metropolitan Teacher Training Center, 自尊感情や自己肯定感に関する研究 (第3年次) (2011), 東京都教職員研修センター紀要第10号
- 5) The story “Farting Bride” can be read as an appendix at <http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/conference-papers/can-virtue-be-measured/kamizono-khotaro-and-chen-yen-hsin.pdf>
- 6) Cf. Kohtaro Kamizono, Yen-Hsin Chen, Kenji Morinaga, Measuring Change of Moral Values in the Collective Consciousness as a Result of a Moral Education Lesson, pp.4-6, <http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/conference-papers/can-virtue-be-measured/kamizono-khotaro-and-chen-yen-hsin.pdf>. And cf. Kamizono, K. (上藺恒太郎) (2011), Assessment of Moral Education Lesson by Association Method –Methodology for Clinical Education-, (連想法による道徳授業評価 —教育臨床の技法—), Kyoiku-shuppan (教育出版)
- 7) Cue word of the association is shown by < >, category by “ ”, response word by ‘ ’.
- 8) The highest point of Ai (volume of association), which is the area of each small circle of a response word, becomes biggest in case of 1/e, i.e. 36.78 percent. When the percentage is higher than 36.78, the circle of the response word becomes smaller and it goes into the so called definition area, where the response word is considered essentially belonging to the definition of the cue word. It means that all respondents, including those who did not recall it, will agree to its recall.

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