

# ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT REPORT OF THE POWER OF DIVERSITY PROJECT: ARTS-BASED OUTREACH PROGRAMS FOR TRANSNATIONAL CHILDREN

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## Perspectives and goals

Our mission is to develop programs for identifying and nourishing the intellectual strengths of linguistically and culturally diverse children rather than emphasizing their weaknesses. We specifically need to activate their “fund of knowledge” (Moll, Amati, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) developed through everyday experiences and to “re-mediate” (Cole & Griffin, 1983) their everyday literacy to connect with an academic one. The children belonging to a Japanese-Brazilian preschool and after-school program could enjoy our original art-based programs as follows. This project was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

## Multicultural Playshop at preschool called "Playground" in Iseaki, Gunma

“Multicultural Playshop” is a practical research site for conducting play workshops to foster a child's development by collaboration between a university and preschool. We have conducted a regular program and a special program.

### 【Regular program】 Monthly Multicultural Playshop for Japanese-Brazilian preschoolers

**Date:** September 10, 2018 – February 2019 **Producer:** Uchida, Sachiko

**Facilitators:** Hasumi, Eri / Japanese undergraduate students in an ECE teacher's training course

**Participants:** Japanese-Brazilian preschoolers in a “Playground”

Each playshop was conducted regularly at a Japanese-Brazilian preschool not been approved by the Japanese government as legitimate schools for two hours once a month. The main activity of the playshop was a play involving multimodal expressions using various materials such as wooden blocks, clay, and pieces of paper so that participants without a common language could play together. Since November 2019, we have conducted workshops focusing on improvisational collaborative sound-mediated plays, such as children interacting using sounds with others. In this type of play, children could explore their favorite sounds, carefully listen to and notice others' sounds, and actively call on the others using sounds. Students video-recorded impressive children's activities by smartphone camera for reflection afterward. Students realized children's high communicative abilities and learned basic attitudes in support for diverse children.



### 【Special program】 Collaboratively making Fantasy Stories with professional actors

**Date:** November 2, 2019 **Producer:** Ishiguro, Hiroaki

**Facilitators:** Sagawa, Daisuke & Nakahara, Kurea (Theater Moments, Tokyo, Japan)

**Participants:** Ten Japanese-Portuguese preschoolers in a “Playground”.

We believe that any child can make their own fantasy stories (Rodari, 1973). In this workshop, two professional actors with assistant university students invited preschoolers to create fantasy stories. First, the children were asked to state their favorite words. Then, they wrote the words and drew pictures relating to the words on paper. The pictures were placed on a wall and they were able to see all the words and pictures. The children explained their reasons for thinking the words and pictures. The children were then asked to connect their words to make coherent stories and play them out. This workshop activity was intended for emancipatory learning (Rancière, 2008) in which children could make their own meanings by making stories; this could activate the children's literacy based on their fund of knowledge in playful situations.



Rancière J. (2008) *Le spectateur émancipé*. La fabrique éditions.

Rodari, (1973) *Grammatica della fantasia*. Introduzione all'arte di inventare storie. Copertina flessibile.

## Drama workshop “NPO COMUNIDADE BRASILEIRA DE KANSAI CBK”, Kobe, Hyogo



**Date:** September 7, 2019 **Producer & Facilitator:** Kawashima, Yuko

**Participants:** Twenty (preschoolers to G2 class, G3 to G9 class) children who have roots in Brazil and attend Saturday School.

Theatre could be a tool to not only engage in critical thinking about our lives but also to emancipate ourselves (Boal, 2000). In this workshop, children first participated in several activities involving the use of their bodies, such as creating still images by bodily expressions; through these activities, children expressed their ideas and feelings. Then, with the theme of “memories of summer this year,” children drew a picture depicting a scene from their experiences the previous summer. After that, they shared the drawings and related stories in a group; while many narrated their experiences enthusiastically, some disclosed them bashfully. They listened to others' stories with fascination. Children related that sharing their own experiences was rare and that it was a good opportunity to get to know one another.

Boal, A (2000). *Theater of the Oppressed* (new ed.). (C. A., M.O. L. McBride, & E. Fryer, Trans.). London: Pluto Press. (Original work published 1974).

## “Future Kamishibai” (Paper Drama) workshop for learners of “Japanese as heritage language” in Toronto

**Date:** November 2, 2019 **Producer & Facilitator:** Ishiguro, Hiroaki

**Participants:** Advance class (G7 to G9 students who can converse in Japanese) , Toronto Kokugo Kyoshitu (Japanese heritage school)

Japanese-Canadian students made paper drama of "his or her day 20 years from now." Paper drama, which is a traditional drama performance in Japan (Ishiguro, 2018), is a good tool to represent personal transformation in life as it is composed of four parts: introduction, development, turn, and conclusion. Through the workshop, students learned the traditional frame of Japanese literature indicated by the four-parts mentioned above. It is hypothesized that while learning Japanese, they might develop their self-esteem through imaging their own future. For many, it was the first time they thought of their days 20 years from now. It seemed that most of the children concentrated on making their paper drama, but a few students were anxiously distracted by thinking about their future. Ultimately, the students became more conscious of their future after attending the workshop.

Ishiguro, H. (2018.1) *Revisiting Japanese Multimodal Drama Performance as Child-Centred Performance Ethnography: Picture-Mediated Reflection on 'Kamishibai'* In Tatiana Chemi, T. & Du, X. (Eds.), *Arts-Based Methods in Education around the World*, River Publisher, Denmark. 89-105.

