What is ESD??
Our idea...

Group 3
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1. Introduction
Right now, as the world becomes more globalized, Japanese education system faces a paradigm shift to Education for Sustainable Development. What is Education for sustainable development? And how do we practice it? We think there are numerous causes in Japanese education system which prevent from realization of ESD. Problems of present school education are caused by:
1. programmed education system,
2. its Western oriented approach, and
3. last but not least, ESD being merely a theory, and in reality it is not understood by people.

Our aim for this presentation is to show our approach to carry out ESD by giving sample ESD lessons. Therefore, we have created 3 sample lessons for elementary school children to be taught in “Integrated Lessons.” Firstly, our lessons are inspired by lectures from this seminar. Secondly, these lessons will target certain “gaps” in our society which halts sustainable development. These gaps include:
1. the gap of between countries,
2. the gap within society, and
3. the gap between ideal value and the dominant value.

Finally, our lesson plans will provide better and clearer understanding of ESD to all listeners, and moreover, encourage them to transform education system.

2. Innovative Three Lessons

Lesson 1 <Do you know China? Do you know Japan?>
First lesson focuses on building mutual understandings about other countries. The target is the 6th grade children. In the lecture by Mr. Oikawa, vice principle of Nakai Elementary School, we learned that his school was doing pair project with US schools. The project was a success and we found it interesting, however, it seems Japan has always focused on the western world but the world is rapidly changing and Asian countries are developing faster than ever. It is ever important to raise awareness of other Asian countries.
In the very beginning of the lesson, we will ask children to list commodities which are made in China so to make them conscious about how close the relationship between Japan and China is. Then we will ask children about what they know about China (For example would be the food, Beijing Olympics) Next we move on to the actual communication. Teachers can teach some simple Chinese greetings like “ni hao”, “xie xie”, “zai jian”. After that, by setting up partnerships with Chinese elementary schools and utilizing the high-tech facilities, we will create opportunities for Japanese as well as Chinese children to have face to face internet communications with each other. There, both Japanese and Chinese children can greet each other using different languages. Also, by inviting Chinese people who currently live in Japan to interact with children in person, children can learn dances and games to show and exchange cultures. In this way children would get the fresh, vivid impressions on some aspects of China.

Lesson 2 <Let’s do sports together>

Second lesson focuses on mending the gap within society, and in our case we want to work on the gap between normal children and mentally/physically challenged children. In the lecture by Mrs. Nakamura who runs “Warashibe Home” we learned the necessity of normalization. We tend to forget even the disabled people belong to the society, and think of them as the burden. If the children get to have a chance to be familiar with the disabled people, the kind of prejudice toward challenged people will decrease.

In this lesson, we want to introduce opportunity for both ordinary and disabled children to play sports together. We will target 4th grade children in ordinary elementary school and the school for the blind. Through four steps, we prompt children to think about disabled children, and provide a chance to communicate and get to know each other better. First, we will let the ordinary children learn relevant information about blind people before going to the school and using visual materials such as video and photos.

Second, we will bring the ordinary children to the school with their eyes closed, and let them talk with the blind children. In this way, their existence will come into the children’s minds. Third, we will let the ordinary children choose a sport and design new rules so that the blind children can play together. Lastly, we will let children play together and get the feedback from these little players, asking about their feelings of playing with ones different from them.

Lesson 3 <Lessons from nature>

The third lesson focuses on the dominant values. In the lecture by Mr. Hopkins, we
learned that we must change our values that we think it’s normal, for instance, values that might have damaged the environment. One of the dominant values that shape our society is on food. While 97% of us are dependent on 3% of Japanese farmers for rice, we dispose a lot of food without any consideration. Most Japanese do not know that the conditions in which farmers are producing rice is harsh. To fill this gap, it is essential to let children know and understand the reality.

To achieve this, we suggest an experience-oriented lesson in rural paddy fields. In this lesson, the grade 6th children will visit paddy fields and do agricultural activities throughout a year. First, they will eat rice sold in supermarkets and discuss the current situations on agriculture in Japan. Then, they will visit farmer’s place and discuss farming. After that, they will actually plant rice, cut grasses, and harvest the rice. Finally they will eat the rice that they produced and share what they feel and think. Since the labor is hard, they will realize the efforts to cultivate a bowl of rice. By having agricultural experience, they will realize the importance of food.

3. Conclusion

By carrying out these lessons explained above, we believe we can spread the knowledge of ESD, and help people practice its ideology. Those ESD lessons have following strengths: 1. cross-curriculum; 2. being practical; 3. narrowing the mentioned gaps; 4. experience-oriented. However, they have limitations: difficulty of 1. evaluation 2. teachers’ and community’s collaboration 3. time management. 4. smooth connection between elementary and junior high school education. It is expected to continue further research and practice.

Citation

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