

## Report on the I-House Lunchtime Lecture Learning from Education in Finland: Japanese Education in the World

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2009, 12:15-1:15 pm

Venue : Kabayama/Matsumoto Room, International House of Japan

Lecturer : Manabu Sato/Professor, University of Tokyo

Language: Japanese (with no English translation)



Prof. Manabu Sato

At the beginning, Prof. Sato stated that in this lecture, he would like to make an attempt to reexamine Japanese education through Finland as the window.

First, there was an explanation of the PISA evaluation that has drawn attention to Finland's education and how it differs from the examinations (TIMSS) that IEA has been administering, where many of the East Asian countries including Japan rank high. Prof. Sato analyzed that the countries like Finland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand that are showing a high competency in PISA are those that have emphasized artistic education.

In the latter half of the lecture, Prof. Sato touched upon the greatness of Finland's education in achieving both quality and equality (a small number of students with low competency, a small gap between schools/regions and in schools) and the high competency level of girls. In general in Japan, there is a notion that when one seeks quality of education, equality is shattered and when one seeks equality, quality becomes bad, but Finland has proven that both quality and equality are attainable at the same time. Concerning school reforms in Finland, Prof. Sato pointed out that economic and education reforms were promoted at the same time, putting emphasis on the public sector at times of economic crisis, dealing with education reform as a future investment, enriching teacher education/libraries, and promoting school/teacher autonomy and creativity, which were all highly suggestive for future Japanese education.

**Manabu Sato** Born in 1951. Graduated from the Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo. President of the Japanese Educational Research Association since 2004. He specializes in school reform and school curriculum. He has visited more than 1,500 schools in Japan and 300 schools abroad and promotes school reform from within the schools in cooperation with teachers. His books include, *Jugyo o kaeru gakko ga kawaru sogogakushu kara karikyuramu no sozo e* [Changing Classes Changes Schools—From Integrated Study to Curriculum Innovation] (Shogakkan, 2000), *Shujukudobetsushido no naniga mondaika* [The Issue of Competence-based Teaching] (Iwanami Booklet, 2004), and *Olli-Pekka Heinonen "gakuryoku sekaiichi" ga motarasumono* [Olli-Pekka Heinonen What "World's Top-ranked School Achievement" Provides] (NHK Books, 2007).

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