

Class Report  
 Introduction to Education Course  
 April 20, 2020  
 Instructor: Markus Budiraharjo, Ed.D.

<p><b>Background</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we make the learning relevant to our students during this Pandemic COVID-19, where no direct contact in real classroom is allowed?</li> <li>2. How can we ensure that students acquire both cognitive and affective learning experiences without necessarily having a direct meeting in class?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Learning strategies</b></p>	<p>This class combined video watching and summarization, as well video response activities. Students were stimulated using a teacher-made essay in response to the video being assigned. They were then required to engage in online Forum Discussion, where they expressed their ideas through writing. No oral expression was accepted, given the limitations of utilizing video-conferencing tools for the whole class (i.e. 42 students in total for each class).</p> <p>The basic structure of the class was set as follows: first, the students received an assignment to critically comprehend and critique the video, second a teacher-made essay was supplied to stimulate students' thinking, and finally, they were assigned to engage in writing activities to present their ideas (So, they were required to think through their fingertips so as to allow them to express their ideas more freely).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>A week before the class, the students received an assignment watch and summarize a documentary film on Imoto Haruhisa. Instruction on belajar.usd.ac.id:</b> Imoto is a Maths teacher. He is a Japanese national. He has 27-year teaching experience. If you found it difficult to understand his Maths teaching, please focus on the dynamics of the class and also his philosophy!</li> </ol> <p>The summary includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you describe this exemplary teacher?</li> <li>• Identify the strengths of his ways of teaching?</li> <li>• What challenges do you think will take place if he teaches in an Indonesian school?</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. On Saturday (April 18), I shared my own essay on the matter. (see essay entitled <b>Learning Math as a way of thinking and life</b>)</li> <li>c. On the D-Day (i.e. Monday, April 20), the students were required to join the Forum Discussion. Instruction: On April 20th, we will spend the class on a forum discussion. Each individual student is expected to post his/her perspective on the following topics.       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Description(s) of Imoto Haruhisa as an exemplary Math teacher.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

2. Inspiration(s) drawn from Imoto Haruhisa's ways of teaching.
3. Inspiration(s) drawn from how his mother taught him to keep a high expectation to all people around him.
4. Inspiration(s) drawn from how Imoto Haruhisa manages to keep a genuine relationship with his students
5. Inspiration(s) drawn from Imoto Haruhisa's dedication to serving all students of any walks of life.

Each posting will be at least 80 words.

Each student is expected to comment and/or ask question(s) to at least three other postings of their classmates. There are no word limits on the comments and/or questions. However, make sure that they are elaborate enough.

Any student receiving comments and/or questions must appropriately respond to them.

Title of the essay: **Learning Math as a way of thinking and life**  
(Markus Budiraharjo)

Nobody questions about the education quality of Japan. Our popular knowledge on Japanese education has partly been influenced by Jerome Polin Sijabat through his compelling book, entitled Mantappu Jiwa (2019). What do Japanese classes really look like? At the moment, NHK TV is airing a documentary film about a Japanese Math teacher named Imoto Haruhisa. The program is accessible up to April 26, 2020 at <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/ondemand/video/4003133/>.

He is truly an exemplary teacher. He is best described as selfless. In his 50th year of age, remaining unmarried, he dedicates his life to his students. From early in the morning till evening, he will move from one class to another, teaching Math for different age groups coming from different walks of life. It is true that he teaches as a Math teacher in a formal classroom in the morning. But he also spends most of his afternoon and evening times teaching students in a number of different communities. Even, he goes to accompany children living in orphanages. Many of these children knew nothing about their biological parents. Imoto Haruhisa comes to accompany them through highly meaningful Math learning.

However, what makes this teacher special is not necessarily his selfless quality. He draws from his own philosophy. Things that are “bad” can easily change into “best” if we want to. He admits to having learned from his own mother. In his childhood, he witnessed how his brother struggled a lot. His physique was weak. He didn’t grow fast enough as others did. When his contemporaries were able to walk and run, he would only sit.

He found his mother held an unwavering belief that his son could walk just like others could. She never showed her despair over the fate of her son. What she demonstrated was her commitment to raising him and genuinely instilling the belief on him that he was just fine. For Imoto, it was a formative moment, when he started to believe that there were no improbable things in life. His brother ended up being able to walk just like others. Any negative and pessimistic comments towards his brother from his surroundings turned out to be wrong.

Since his early childhood, Imoto started to employ what Ellen Langer (1989) calls “mindfulness” in response to his surroundings. Life is never a fixed reality. Life has its full potentials when imaginative capacities of humans are nurtured, just like what Victor Frankl had taught. Living under a highly demoralizing circumstance of the Nazi Concentration Camp, Victor Frankl witnessed how his wife and many of his comrades perished to die. What Frankl did was to “reframe” his own factual realities. When most people gave up, he carefully managed to keep his spirit alive by writing down learning plans after the war ended. It was his unwavering spirit and sheer optimism that allowed him to survive and even thrive through his ordeal. He managed to deal with his feelings, worries, fears, and despair by writing them down. Frankl ended up being victorious, and his life has taught us what it means to be optimistic no matter what happens.

Imoto Haruhisa feels how lucky he was to have an exemplary mother, who was very skillful at navigating her own feelings and reframing the bad luck of her son to be the best luck of him. From the video, Imoto’s philosophy is apparent from the ways he maintains relationships and conducts teaching and learning activities. Imoto is described as highly flexible making friends with all his students. His nickname is “Imo Bro” – a very special term that represents a borderless relationship. However, strangely enough, such a close relationship does not make him lose respect from his students. On the contrary, he is well-respected among his students for two reasons.

First, he becomes an authentic teacher. He never uses any textbook. He will hand in a piece of paper to each individual student. It consists of some Math problems, that he develops himself. His students will have some time to solve the problems. Some prefer to work on their own. Some others prefer to discuss with their peers. From the beginning, Imoto makes it clear: “There is no wrong answer. What you need to do is to tell me how you come to solve the problems the way you do.” As a teacher, he certainly prepares some solutions formed in formulas. However, in one of the recorded classes, he was struck by his students’ ingenious solutions. Although he has prepared three possible solutions, he ended up bursting into laughter after his students found the counter-examples that made his prepared answers wrong. Responding to this occasion, he says, “You are here now not for the purpose of earning good grades with your Math. You come to

	<p>learn how to use your brain to think, and find appropriate solutions, in accordance to your unique ways.”</p> <p>Second, the videoed class looks very playful, not a regular Math lesson at all. Some students draw pictures on the worksheet. Some others report their progress. Some write their solutions on the board. On top of that, what makes this class special is that Imoto will take a close look at any errors that students make. Students’ mistakes are a treasure box for him. Imoto gains a lot of inspiration from the mistakes and errors that students have made. It is through many mistakes that he can empathically think and feel what troubles and challenges they encounter. Although the classes look playful, and the conversations sound more colloquial rather than formal, Imoto has successfully created an ample room for students to engage in idea experimentation.</p> <p>The last note on Imoto as an exemplary Math teacher is the fact that he didn’t graduate from School of Education. He earned his bachelors’ degree from electrical engineering. Thus, he didn’t attend classes in pedagogy, developmental psychology, and teaching practicum. These three components are basic ingredients found in School of Education curricula. Interestingly, he manages to embrace both the theoretical framework and practical skills to teach throughout his teaching. He is able to present his genuine self as a Math teacher, making students and their parents trust him. They join Imoto’s Math classes, not for the purpose of getting better grades, but they want to acquire a way of thinking and life through Math learning. Math is never oversimplified into fixed rules, but it becomes a space that allows students to engage in higher-order thinking skills.</p>
<p><b>Perceived learning</b></p>	<p>[10:22 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: I apologise, my Indihome is down</p> <p>[10:23 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: I could not give you feedback on belajar</p> <p>[10:24 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: Now, I'm inviting you to reflect on today's class. What have you learned from today's class?</p> <p>[10:25 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: Did you find my little essay helpful for you? How did it help you?</p> <p>[10:28 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 852-2778-2345: It helps me to understand the big concept more of Imoto's teaching method, and the behind reason why he teach like that</p> <p>[10:28 AM, 4/20/2020] Niko: It gives me an insight into how you dissect the pivotal points from the video. Is somewhat like a blueprint for me to expands my notions about his methods of teaching 👍 👍</p> <p>[10:29 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 896-7415-9977: I learn about how Imoto's teaching skill is very inspiring me as a student or maybe soon as a</p>

teacher. He's a very humble and friendly person so it makes me want to be like him too. I think we have to more respect to others opinion too.

[10:30 AM, 4/20/2020] Lazuardi: Yes Sir.. I'm so helpful by your essay.. I can understand well and it gives me more explanation.. Maybe I can understand just by watching the video, but your short essay gives me more than just what I see from the video...

[10:31 AM, 4/20/2020] Thenia: For today's class, I've got lots of value things based on our topic and your essay. From what Imoto has done as teacher is really interesting and different from other teacher in general. He persuades his students to build thinking skills rather than focus to achive a best result, organize and manage classes become more joyful and effective, praising whatever his students effort, puts himself as their bestfriend, and long-term optimism. As a future teacher, I really want to adopt his approaching and teaching methods for my future students. And also thank you for your little essay that helps me to understand the whole story of Imoto, sir.

[10:32 AM, 4/20/2020] Sheila: I learn about the different way to teaching like Imoto doing of his class. Imoto is inspiring me to be a good teacher in the future.

[10:32 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 819-0400-1150: Yes.. Your essay inspired me.. Maybe you want to lecture us like Imoto?

[10:32 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 813-7992-7336: I learn a lot about Imoto's teaching skill. It's helps me to more know about the best way to teaching students. Because soon I wanna be a teacher. So it's very helpfull for me :)

[10:34 AM, 4/20/2020] Niko: I learn the significance role of educator in shaping the students. In this context, Haruhisa opens my eyes with his rebellious way of teaching that we have to be the one who controls the system, not otherwise. Be the one who creates the waves, not the one who rides it. To understand ourselves and to be ourselves are our greatest power to become a prominent individual in the future.

[10:34 AM, 4/20/2020] Evelyn Wilby: Yes sir, your essay really inspired me. From Imoto I can learn that being a teacher we must remain patient in educating and teaching and also creating a good atmosphere in learning that can be started from our relationship with students. The characteristics that Imoto himself has as a teacher would be able to help me and be a motivation for me if in the future I will become an educator.

[10:35 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 822-2071-5511: I learnt a lot from today's class sir. From the way of we thinking until how should we respect others opinion. Its all the materials to become a successful teacher.

And about your essay, its really helpful and its like to be a guide of me for doing my essay. Thank you sir! 🙏

[10:35 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 878-3846-9422: This essay really inspire me of the way Imoto teaching and gave me inspiration to great teaching methods.

[10:37 AM, 4/20/2020] Gandhi Ajeng PP: I can see how Imoto taught us that we don't need to be the perfect one or even taking notes for the materials. He gives us an example how to build good environment with the students inside or outside the class. He really dedicates himself teaches in the school and pointing his view on the students learning progress 👍

[10:39 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 896-6555-3761: From today's class, I learned about how to create sustainable environment that is being projected from Imoto's way of teaching. Imoto's thoughts could help me understand what is being a genuine teacher for. Guiding me to understand how society works and be glad to have myself as what I am.

[10:43 AM, 4/20/2020] Desti: From today's class I learned a lot and also from your essay. I learned a lot from Imoto as a student or a teacher later. He inspire his students with the teaching methods he provides makes students unafraid and builds students confidence. Also, the most important thing from Imoto is hp he strives for the thing he loves and he gives almost all of his time to it.

[10:44 AM, 4/20/2020] Suzana: I learn from today's class is about Imoto Haruhisa teaching skill. He is so inspire me to be a gear teacher oneday and can understand well my students.

[10:45 AM, 4/20/2020] Dionz: From today's class i learned a lot sir, it really change my way of thinking and this really help me to become a good teacher someday. Your essay is really helpful for me to guide me doing my essay, thank you sir

[10:45 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 857-8727-4757: From today's class, I learned about how Imoto teaches and keeps his students from getting bored in class. I really like the way Imoto teaches. He can make his students think more broadly and try to solve the material Imoto provides. I think Imoto is a very professional teacher. I really like when he teaches in class. He is my inspiration. One day I hope I can teach my students like Imoto did.

[10:45 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 853-4585-8011: from today's class I learned about the importance of hope and optimism. I also learned about how Imoto educates his students.

	<p>[10:47 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 857-2703-6782: I learnt that become a teacher isn't an easy job. They need the appropriate method of teaching and also good attitude to make their students comfortable and can get the main knowledge.</p> <p>[10:51 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 895-3791-91451: From today's class I can learn how to be an inspiring teacher whose learning systems rely more on brain function and thinking skill than just stick into one formula. It makes students develop better. Also by the approach with the students, which makes the classroom atmosphere more enjoyable but still comprehensive.</p> <p>[11:02 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 896-7487-9997: From today's class I can learn about Imoto Haruhisa teaching skills. He is an inspirational person. he makes me want to be a great teacher in the future and can understand my students well.</p> <p>[11:06 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 898-5312-820: From today's class, I can understand the method used by Imoto to teach. I can also understand how to make students interested in the learning we provide, one of them by using an approach with them. When we can approach students, then learning will feel fun and it can improve student learning. Imoto inspired me to become a teacher like him that was liked by his students.</p> <p>[11:10 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: Amazing notes. I feel how lucky I am to have you all in my class.</p> <p>[11:11 AM, 4/20/2020] Niko: It is also our pleasure to have you as our lecturer, sir. You teaches us many things and it broadens our horizon in such a significant way. Thank you, sir @Markus Budiraharjo 👍👍</p> <p>[11:11 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 819-0400-1150: 👍</p> <p>[11:11 AM, 4/20/2020] Markus Budiraharjo: I'm now heading to campus. Planning to do a couple of things. And getting my Indihome fixed. Stay home, stay safe, and stay happy.</p> <p>[11:12 AM, 4/20/2020] +62 819-0400-1150: You too Sir</p> <p>[11:12 AM, 4/20/2020] Miggy: Kay sir be careful 👍👍</p> <p>[11:13 AM, 4/20/2020] Niko: We also wish you a safety and endurance during this epidemic, sir. God bless you and your family 👍👍</p>
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is apparent from their vivid responses that students were stimulated both cognitively and affectively. Learning in this mode,</li> </ul>

	<p>i.e. by responding to the video, stimulated by the teacher-made essay, was proven to be highly effective and efficient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A closer look at the individual's responses and questions allows me to see the degree of participation on the part of my students. I was amazed by the fact that the students were mostly committed to learning. Many students performed very well, above my expectations. Even, underperforming students seem to get stimulated to engage more after seeing how their well-performing colleagues published their responses in the Forum Discussion.</li><li>• Down the line, "this thinking through their fingers strategy" certainly allows more room for personal engagement and metacognitive thinking to happen. By the end of the class, students reflected on the learning for 90 minutes. To my surprise, many students were so eloquently expressive in their reflections. They wouldn't have done so vividly in real class where all students gather in the same room. This technology has allowed some kind of democratization for many. So promising, indeed.</li></ul>
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