Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education:
A Review of the Anglophone Literature

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In the past decade, the field of Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education has seen rapid development in English-speaking countries with the establishment of numerous university-affiliated research initiatives and institutes, the publication of books, chapters, and journal articles, and presentations, panels, and pre-conference sessions at annual meetings of (inter)national professional organizations, such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), the American Educational Studies Association (AESA), and others (Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education, 2018). There is now a growing body of scholarly literature documenting the history, explicating key concepts, and comparing the philosophies and practices of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) , Josei Toda (1900-1958), and Daisaku Ikeda (b. 1928) with other philosophies and theories. Topics include value-creating pedagogy, human(istic) education, global citizenship education, communities studies, human geography, human rights and peace education, dialogue, intersections of religion/Buddhism and education, and teacher-student relationships, to name a few (Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education, 2018). Since Fall 2019, I have been teaching a course on reading research in the field of Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education within DePaul University's degree program in Value-Creating Education for Global Citizenship. This article follows the structure of the course, introducing the existing English-language secondary literature in the field by categorizing it into what Goulah and Gebert (2009), following Holquist (2002), call intrinsic and extrinsic research, with the latter further divided into comparative, theoretical, and empirical research.

Intrinsic Research

Intrinsic research refers to the approach that examines the historical and primary texts by Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda in Japanese and in the contexts in which they were written. In other words, it deeply examines the authors'—in this case, Makiguchi's, Toda's, and

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Ikeda's—thoughts and practices within the cultural, political, and historical contexts in which they lived. The earliest body of literature in Ikeda/Soka Studies focuses on Makiguchi's life and themes in his major publications (Bethel, 1973, 1989; Saito, 1989; Shiohara, 2001). More recently, Gebert and Joffee (2007) and Goulah and Gebert (2009) provide a comprehensive introduction to Makiguchi's life and theory. Ito (2009) focuses on the interrogation record of Makiguchi during WWII to examine his critique of the wartime fascist regime. Furthermore, Goulah (2015a) provides an overview of the Makiguchi corpus, including his writings that are not translated into English.

As Goulah (2018) points out, Makiguchi's *sōka*, or "value-creating," pedagogy has inspired what today, under Ikeda, is known as "Soka education" (see also Goulah & Ito, 2012). Therefore, articles on Ikeda also often provide a brief account of Makiguchi's life and theory (Goulah, 2010d, 2012b; Goulah & Ito, 2012; Goulah & Urbain, 2013). Compared to Makiguchi, intrinsic research on Ikeda is limited as Ikeda's biography has been well documented by Ikeda himself (e.g., Ikeda, 1980, 2000). Secondary sources therefore often focus on Ikeda's biography relative to a specific field of study, such as peace (Goulah & Urbain, 2013; Urbain, 2010), education (Goulah & Ito, 2012), language (Goulah, 2012a), and his consumption and production of translated work (Gebert, 2012). Although Toda is mentioned in many of the historical/biographical studies on Makiguchi and Ikeda, there are only a few that specifically focus on Toda and his educational perspectives and practices (Inukai & Goulah, 2018; Shiohara, 2008; Urbain, 2010).

Comparative Research

While intrinsic research considers Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda's texts within their historical and cultural contexts, extrinsic research considers these texts and their ideas in translation and application in various contexts and disciplines. One such approach is to compare Makiguchi's and/or Ikeda's ideas to that of other philosophers and traditions. For example, Goulah (2010e) examines Francis W. Parker's influence on the development of Makiguchi's thought and the confluences of thought between the two, particularly relative to Makiguchi's use of the phrase "harmonious community life." There are also studies in which Makiguchi's ideas and practices are compared to those of Mahatma Gandhi (Sharma, 2002, 2008, 2015, 2018), Confucius (He, 2013, 2016), John Dewey (Garrison, 2019; He, 2013, 2016; Sharma, 2002), Mikhail Bakhtin (Goulah, 2009c, 2013a), Lev Vygotsky (Goulah, 2009a), and Lucy Sprague Mitchel (Goulah, 2010c). Heffron (2016) brings Makiguchi, Karl Marx, John Dewey, and Jane Addams together in the context of Educational Leaders Without Borders; Sherman (2016) compares Makiguchi's theory of value creation to Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen's capability approach; and Hatano (2009) draws on the language theories of Bakhtin and Vygotsky in order to discuss the dialogic nature of

Makiguchi's value-creating theory and its applicability in language learning.

There are also studies that bring Ikeda's ideas into comparison with other philosophies. For example, Goulah (2010d) compares Ikeda with Parker and Dewey. Goulah and He (2015) bring various educational philosophers including both Makiguchi and Ikeda together under Confucius' idea of "great learning." Recently, there is a growing interest in comparing Ikeda's ideas with various African philosophies (Mino & Heto, 2020; Odari, 2020). Although comparison is not the focus of the study, there are also studies that bring Ikeda's idea of global citizenship into dialogue with other philosophies on cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan education (Obelleiro, 2012, 2013), and studies that contextualize Makiguchi's and Ikeda's ideas in O'Sullivan's framework of transformative learning (Goulah, 2009b, 2010b).

Theoretical Research

Theoretical studies, especially in the field of language education, constitute the largest category within the Ikeda/Soka Studies literature. Makiguchi himself wrote extensively on language education (reading and writing) throughout his educational career, developing what he called the sentence model application approach for composition instruction (e.g., Makiguchi, 1898/2013). Gebert (2013) and Ito (2017) further explore Makiguchi's literacy instruction in comparison to the most popular approach to literacy education of his time. Makiguchi's theory of value creation has also been applied to studies on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education (Hatano, 2013), language policy and planning in contemporary Japan (Hatano, 2009), and second/foreign language education in the contemporary U.S. (Goulah, 2010b, 2013b; Okamura, 2017). Ikeda's ideas on human education, dialogue, global citizenship, and "society for education" are also applied to English education policy in Japan (Hatano, 2012), English as a Second Language (ESL) education in the U.S. (Goulah, 2012c, 2017), foreign language education and study abroad programs in the U.S. (Goulah, 2010f, 2011a, 2011b), and language education in general (Goulah, 2019; Obelleiro, 2012).

Although not in the field of language education, there are also theoretical studies that pertain to language. One example is Gebert and Goulah's (2017) analysis of the issues and challenges of translating Makiguchi's work from Japanese into English. Related to the issue of translation, Inukai (2013) compares Makiguchi's original writing of *The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy* with Bethel's translation published as *Education for Creative Living*. Gebert (2012) also examines Ikeda's attitude toward translation. He argues that as a reader of translation and producer of texts that are translated into various languages, Ikeda views translation as a vehicle for cross-cultural communication. Similarly, Goulah (2012b) explores Ikeda's philosophy and practice of intercultural dialogue, which, as stated above, he calls "value-creative dialogue."

Goulah (2018) further examines the presence and role of dialogue in education, and Bradford (2018) provides a thorough analysis of Ikeda's published dialogues. There are also other studies that focus on Ikeda's philosophy of dialogue in relation to global citizenship (Goulah, 2013a; Goulah & Ito, 2012; Obelleiro, 2013; Sharma, 2011), where language is not the central focus but implicit in the practice of dialogue.

There is also a growing number of theoretical and conceptual studies outside of language education and language/dialogue. The ones on Makiguchi include analyses of his perspective of geography education (Takeuchi, 1999, 2000), community studies (Gebert, 2009), the state (Miyata, 2000), educational leadership and principalship (English, 2015; Heffron, 2016, 2018), and value-creating pedagogy relative to education in Japan's modern era (Kumagai, 2000). The ones on Ikeda include an in-depth analysis of his notion of human education (Goulah, 2020b) and global citizenship (Goulah, 2020a; Obelleiro, 2012), as well as his ideas relative to curriculum theorizing (Cornell, 2020), philosophy of peace (Goulah & Urbain, 2013; Urbain, 2010, 2018), human rights (Matsuoka, 2010), environmental ethics (Goulah, 2010a), poverty eradication (Goulah, 2015b), leadership theory (Chilson, 2014; Whitney, 2015), and teacher education standards (Kuo & Aniezue, 2018). Inukai (2012) analyzes major themes in Ikeda research conducted in China and Taiwan.

Empirical Research

Empirical studies in the field of Ikeda/Soka Studies are growing especially with recent doctoral dissertations but are still relatively limited. Outside Soka schools, for example, Goulah (2009b) examined whether students in a high school Japanese foreign language class created value in terms of beauty, gain, and good as a result of a curriculum based on Edmund O'Sullivan's transformative learning theory and Makiguchi's concept of community studies. Others have explored how self-identified Soka educators in Japan and the U.S. characterize so-called "Soka education" in practice (Hrdina, 2018; Nagashima, 2012, 2016; Takazawa, 2016). Bradford and Shields (2017) interviewed two EcoJustice educators and two self-identified "Soka educators," comparing their perspectives and practices centered on relational ontology and epistemology. de Melo Silva (2000) conducted a large-scale study to examine the effects of the Makiguchi Project in Action and Literacy Poles, two educational projects enacted by the Brazil SGI Educators Division and inspired by Makiguchi's philosophy of value-creating pedagogy. Makiguchi Project in Action is now called Soka Education in Action, and this is examined by Mokuria and Wandix-White (2020) along with self-identified "Soka educators" in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Within Soka schools, studies have been conducted at Soka kindergartens in Japan, Hong

Kong, and Singapore (Ikegami & Agbenyega, 2014; Ikegami & Grieshaber, 2017; Ikegami & Rivalland, 2016), wherein Ikegami and colleagues examined teachers' and administrators' perspectives on quality early childhood education and quality teacher-child interaction through a Soka framework. A case study conducted by Guajardo and Reiser (2016) at Soka University in Tokyo found that the philosophy of humanism, evident through faculty and staff's care for the students, the world, and for each other, informed their global citizenship program. Sherman (2019) also conducted a case study at Soka University, revealing that the students' identification as global citizens increased as they spent more time at the university. Sherman (2019) attributed this to the university's normative environment of endorsing global citizenship ideals and promoting global awareness. At Soka University of America (SUA), Goulah (2012d) examined current and former students' perspectives of their compulsory study abroad and its implications for their development of value creation and human becoming. Storch (2015) examined the history and the academic curriculum of SUA, along with other institutions she calls "Buddhist-based universities." Inukai (2020) examined SUA faculty's perspective on what constitutes a "good teacher" and "good teaching."

Although not strictly empirical studies, there are also anecdotal scholarly articles that recount personal applications or implementations of Soka approaches to education. For example, Heffron (2009), based on his personal experience as a professor at SUA, discusses SUA's curriculum and teaching practices—in particular, Core and Learning Cluster—relative to Ikeda's and Makiguchi's philosophy. Another example is Monte Joffee, a cofounder of The Renaissance Charter School in New York City, who discusses in an interview with Goulah and Gebert the ways in which Makiguchi's value-creating education informed The Renaissance Charter School in its conception, development, and practice (Joffee et al., 2009). Okamura (2017) also shares examples from his Japanese foreign language class as a way to explicate Makiguchi's five-step knowledge cultivation model. One such example was a sushi making unit, through which students became value-creators of beauty, gain, and good by using the Japanese language they learned.

What Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education Can Offer

In addition to a course on Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education, I also teach other graduate and undergraduate courses in teacher preparation at DePaul in which I assign many of the abovementioned works on and by Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda. Students who know nothing about Ikeda/Soka studies before these courses always respond positively to them, but especially during the past year when the U.S. faced myriad challenges such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, political divisiveness, and racial injustice, more students have explicitly

shared with me that they find hope and solutions in the ideas contained in these readings. It was toward the end of the quarter teaching a course on Josei Toda when George Floyd was killed in May, 2019. I immediately reached out to all of my students, and one student responded, "It has been very hard to deal with everything going on but I must say that thinking about Toda and global citizenship brings forward the necessity for us as educators to create spaces for discussion, reflection, and civic engagement." Another student wrote in her final paper as follows:

> [T]he concept of human revolution is more prevalent than ever with regard to the race riots that are occurring in cities across the U.S. as this analysis is being written. ...Each person is reflecting on the local, national, and global community. We are all experiencing our own inner transformations as a result of reflections after seeing the painful images that are shown in the media of Black lives being senselessly taken by white supremacists.

This student later told me that human revolution, or the inner transformation of individuals, is what is most needed to truly transform our society and that she will carry this concept with her as an educator.

In the Fall 2020 quarter, when I taught the course on analyzing research in Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education, I assigned the book chapter I co-authored with Michio Okamura (Inukai & Okamura, in press) which will be published this year in a book titled *Hope and Joy in Education: Engaging Daisaku Ikeda Across Curriculum and Contexts* (Nuñez & Goulah, in press) with the wish to inspire my students, who are educators, to create hope in their (teaching) lives amidst the challenging and uncertain circumstances. One student wrote the following in a course reflection:

> On the hard days it can be so easy for educators to lose sight of their own objective in the classroom. Since entering graduate school at DePaul, I have witnessed many educators pushed to their breaking points: both during the Chicago Teachers Union Strike in 2019, and the heavy effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Inukai and Okamura's article could not be published at a more meaningful and impacting time. Throughout the article they mention the ways in which educators can use hope as an action verb in the classroom. I appreciate the ways in which Inukai and Okamura provide strategies to foster that hope, and I can see myself referencing their arguments when I need a little inspiration myself down the road.

Another student also wrote that reading this chapter shifted her perspective toward herself, her circumstances, and her approach to teaching:

> Inukai and Okamura's article encourages me to take action instead of having fears.

> Since I moved to the U.S., I often felt I was powerless, and I thought I cannot do anything to change the current situation as an educator. ...Also, knowing how the socio-economic status impacts educational quality made me feel hopeless because I cannot change such an aspect. However, when I read Inukai and Okamura's article, I realized that I was just blaming the current situation and that I needed to create hope. Imagining me creating good relationships with students or teaching the importance of thinking about others made me think about what I can do rather than focusing on how it is difficult to deal with the current situation.

I believe that these reflections from students who have encountered the philosophies of Ikeda, Toda, and Makiguchi for the first time are a testament to the power and the possibility of what they can offer to educators and education in the U.S. and the world. For me, too, teaching and engaging students in discussion on their ideas and receiving such positive responses inspired in me hope and joy amidst the challenges I was facing as an educator. I am excited to contribute to the further development of the field of Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education in the coming years to initiate positive change in education and society.

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