

An Examination of the Influence of Japan's Early Twentieth Century Anti-dramatic Attitude on the Development of Tsubouchi's Child Drama

Takeo FUJIKURA

Abstract

Shoyo Tsubouchi's concept, "Kateiyo Jido Geki" or "Child Drama for Domestic Presentation," introduced unique and innovative theories for child-participating drama. For the first time in Japan, such aspects as a child-centered approach, process-orientation, and the employment of age-appropriate materials were addressed. Publicly, Tsubouchi began encouraging the ideal concept of his child drama in 1921; however, in reality, he had acknowledged the significance of these elements as early as 1902, but seems to have thought that their practice was "infeasible" at that time. Thus, he had to continue to develop his concept until the time was right for its acceptance.

An in-depth study of the process of his concept formation reveals how his ideal drama theories were the result of his adaptation amidst the conventional public antipathy to dramatic activities. Tsubouchi found a way to incorporate elements of drama into school education while at the same time avoiding public criticism. In doing so, he necessarily shifted his original dramatic approach from product-orientation to a more process-oriented one. Through an examination of this trajectory of Tsubouchi's dramatic endeavors in various circumstances over time, this paper illustrates how his final child drama concept came to be formed in response to the influences of political, social, educational and aesthetic systems.

Shoyo Tsubouchi's concept of "Kateiyo Jidogeki" or "Child Drama for Domestic Presentation" was one of the earliest and most innovative theories affecting the development of Japanese child drama. It was a child-centered, process-oriented drama activity employing age-appropriate materials for the first time in Japan. It was designed to be performed by children with only

family members as the side-coaches and audience.

Tsubouchi first presented this concept in 1921 during the Taisho New Education Movement that had developed as an antithesis to the previous Meiji Era's knowledge- and skill-based education. Tsubouchi himself, in retrospect, maintained:

Although the pageant attempts [which preceded his child drama activity] partially failed under complex circumstances leaving only their theoretics behind, I am proud that the child drama activities, through play creation and several demonstrational performances, created a significant sensation with an intrinsic influence on society"¹ ("Shogen" 1)

Tsubouchi's innovation in theoretical aspects was "an epoch-making movement answering the needs of a new era," (K. Ichikawa 66) in the field of child drama in Japan, introducing new concepts such as child-centeredness, age-appropriateness, and the educational value of dramatic activity, all bolstered by contemporary scientific theory. In addition to these new concepts, Tsubouchi provided detailed guidance on how to select, approach, and direct the child drama. All these elements of his child drama concept are, as Toshio Kawatake maintains, still regarded as the essential principles of child drama in Japan ("Jidogekini Okeru Tsubouchi Shoyo" 70).

However, this ideal notion was not a new one for Tsubouchi; he had been fostering it for some time. Already in a 1902 article, Sazanami Iwaya (1870-1933) reported on Tsubouchi's approval of child-centered drama. It is evident that, although acknowledging the value of child-participating drama, Tsubouchi was unable to materialize it until the Taisho Era. Close examination of the trajectory of Tsubouchi's dramatic activities with his students reveals that there had been a crucial social limitation: the strong antipathy against theatrical activity under which the formation of an ideal child drama was not realistically feasible. In response to the anti-dramatic criticism, Tsubouchi gradually started to shift his attitude and attempted to integrate drama with educational endeavors. Thus, the conventional anti-dramatic social view functioned as a driving force for Tsubouchi to integrate drama and education.

In this paper, I will examine Tsubouchi's attitude toward student performance to illustrate how the public's skeptical views against drama affected his direction of dramatic endeavors. According to Sazanami Iwaya, Tsubouchi had already indicated his approval of child drama in which children

themselves perform. As will be illustrated later in this paper, I contend that, due to the deep prejudice and hostile reaction of the society against dramatic performance, Tsubouchi strategically shifted the emphasis of his dramatic assertion from performance toward its process, emphasizing its educational aspect. This process-oriented focus can be observed both in his teaching method and in his National Reader Textbook creation, which had been conceived and practiced well before his child drama endeavor. By illustrating Tsubouchi's inherent dramatic methodologies in the readers as well as the trajectory of the strategic shift in his attitude toward dramatic practice, I will clarify the detailed adaptation process that Tsubouchi underwent within the existing social anti-dramatic social view before his child drama activities were developed.

Tsubouchi's Ideal Child Drama and His Acknowledgement of Society's Negative View of Dramatic Activity

In Iwaya's 1902 article, in which he introduced German "*otogi shibai*" (fairy tale drama) for children to the Japanese people, Iwaya reported two important issues regarding Tsubouchi's idealistic child drama. First, along with the child drama performed by adult actors, many scripts had already been published for a form of child drama that was designed to be performed by children under the direction of German schoolteachers. Iwaya went on to suggest that this type of child drama should also be considered for practical use in Japanese society ("Doitsu no Otogishibai" 3). Thus, by 1902, Iwaya had introduced both child drama performed by adult actors and by children themselves.

In his article, Iwaya also reported on his discussion with Tsubouchi concerning the possibility of practicing the child drama by children:

Mr. Shoyo Tsubouchi also once insisted that this [the child drama designed to be performed by children] should be practiced in Japan. I discussed with him the possibility of disseminating this type of child drama in Japan before I had left for Germany; however, as it was infeasible then, it was left untouched (3)

There is no further information as to the details of their conversation, but these remarks certainly support the fact that Tsubouchi had been acquainted with

this style of child drama well before Iwaya's trip to Germany in 1900 and that Tsubouchi was encouraging it to be practiced in Japan. It is evident that child drama designed for children to act out had long been incubating in Tsubouchi's mind. Nevertheless, at this point it was, as Iwaya stated, "infeasible" (3). This social condition, in turn, assumed a crucial role in forming Tsubouchi's dramatic activity as well as his attitude toward it. I will first examine Tsubouchi's early experience with student production that may have reinforced his perspective of child drama feasibility.

Tsubouchi's First Stage Production with Students and Society's Reaction

In 1890, with the foundation of the literature department at the Tokyo Senmon Gakko (later to be Waseda University), Professor Tsubouchi formed the Recitation Study Group called Ekifu-Kai and began teaching elocution techniques to his students. The earliest record of a performance produced by Tsubouchi with his students goes back to April, 1894, when he was teaching at the Tokyo Senmon Gakko. This performance was a pageant performed by the Ekifu-Kai students as part of an entertainment during the school's spring athletic festival held at the Sumida-en Park, Tokyo. The first production was made possible by the enthusiasm of those students who had been passionately demanding an opportunity to demonstrate the result of their elocution training. They performed a few scenes from *Jishin Kato* (*Earthquake and the Warrior Kato*), a historical drama written by the noted Kabuki playwright, Mokuami Kawatake (1816-1893). Harukazu Kitami, the author of *Tetteki to Shunsho - Kindaiengi no Hajimari*, reported, "It was an unprecedented radical event in Japan both as a student production and as pageantry" (57).

As a consequence, Tsubouchi and his students became the target of harsh social criticism. Biyo Minakuchi (1873-1940), a member of the Ekifu-Kai and one of the actors of the production, recalled the social reaction after the production:

Public opinion began attacking us. Some said mistakenly it was unforgivable to invite professional actors to the school's athletic festival though I am not so sure we looked good enough to be taken as professional actors. Newspapers such as *Japan* also harshly reproached our

production in their articles the next day, stating that it was outrageous to let students put on rouge and imitate actors' mannerisms and intonations (43)

Even the words “acting” or “drama” incited contempt, for these words were associated with such words as “beggars” or “prostitution” in the traditional narrative of Kabuki. Shigetoshi Kawatake reported that newspapers such as *the Yomiuri News* and *The Hochi News* even attacked Tsubouchi, stating, “On top of letting students imitate riverbed beggars [actors], he himself passionately supported the production” (S. Kawatake and Yanagita 367). Kenko Ichijima, one of the founders of the Tokyo Senmon Gakko and a close friend of Tsubouchi, recollected that he “did not think it was an appropriate thing to be done” (6).

However, it should be taken into account that the target of criticism was not only the Kabuki production itself but also the post-production activities during which excited actors came out onto the stage in makeup and costumes, dancing wildly in exhilaration. Tsubouchi was criticized harshly for producing this play in public and allowing what society considered self-indulgent post activities to follow.

In fact, Tsubouchi had been well aware of the hostile view his theatrical demonstration would likely generate. According to Minakuchi, Tsubouchi had been persistently beseeched by his Recitation Study Group students for permission to do a public demonstration performance, but he had stubbornly told them to wait, stating that the time was “not yet right” (qtd. in S. Kawatake and Yanagita 460). Shigetoshi Kawatake also reported that when Tsubouchi established the Recitation Study Group and conducted a few recitation demonstrations in school prior to the public play production, there was already strong antipathy among Tsubouchi's peers towards his unorthodox attempt to use play scripts for the recitation material (231). Ichijima maintained that even Tsubouchi's attempts at dramatic research and recitation study were “viewed as something inconceivable” (6).

Ichijima reported that within the school, the recitation demonstration grew into a big social debate when a reporter from *the Yomiuri Newspaper* reviewed Tsubouchi's recitation demonstration, stating, “It is quite outrageous to see the students take pride in imitating the riverbed beggars in the classroom setting” (6). Tsubouchi's students vigorously attempted to defend

the appropriateness of their activity. The heated dispute continued between the students and the commentators for some time, but Tsubouchi withdrew the study group from the school setting and began holding sessions at his own house so that it would not hurt the school's reputation.

These incidents indeed demonstrate how the Japanese public considered it outrageous and antisocial to witness students demonstrating recitation technique, let alone the dramatic performances.² As demonstrated earlier, when even college students were not commonly allowed to participate in dramatic activity, it naturally followed that dramatic activities by children were out of the question. As Iwaya had stated, it was indeed "infeasible" ("Doitsu no Otogishibai" 3).

Tsubouchi's Shift in the Direction of His Dramatic Activity

The deeply rooted social antipathy against dramatic activity that had labeled Tsubouchi's series of dramatic ventures as "scandalous" gradually began to influence Tsubouchi's attitude towards his work. Around this time, his attitude about recitation and dramatic activity began to shift from product-oriented activities to process-oriented and educationally motivated operations. The first indication of this shift of focus can be observed in his stance regarding an incident that occurred in 1898.

In that year (Year 31 of the Meiji Era), a controversy arose when students at the Niigata Normal School performed a scene from the Kabuki play *Taikoki* for Kigensetu, the National Foundation day. The performance involved a love scene, and this production, as well as the school itself, became the target of heated accusations and criticism in several newspaper articles. Eventually, the principal, Sadanori Kubota, had to resign due to his responsibility for the production. In contrast, the magazine *Taiyo* defended the students and questioned the newspapers' attitude of targeting the school production, pointing out that society held a biased view against dramatic activity itself without even examining the content ("Niigata Shihan Gakkono Engeki Jiken" 43).

In that same year, in the midst of this heated controversy among educators, Tsubouchi wrote an article "Gakko ni okeru Gakusei no Engeki" (Student Performance in the School Setting). In this article, Tsubouchi

commended a few magazines like *Taiyo* that supported the students' performance as precursors for the coming era. However, Tsubouchi concluded that it was a mistake on the part of Niigata Normal School, which executed this performance without enough preparation. He contended, "Mere pastime-driven performance by students without a sufficient understanding of literature is not only meaningless, but also can be harmful given the present social condition" ("Gakko ni okeru Gakusei no Engeki" 7-8).

Tsubouchi took the government's side on this debate, conscious of the conventional view of society against theatrical activities. He was hesitant to support the school production in this case since it had no educational significance. But at the same time, Tsubouchi did not oppose the school production itself; he was writing against the superficial, gaudy and non-educational aspects of a school production that fostered self-conceited attitudes in students and provoked antipathy toward theatrical activity in Japanese society.

Tsubouchi's other article on recitation (*rodokuho*) in the same issue of *Waseda Bungaku* further elaborated his attitude toward the theatre activity of this time. In the article, "Gakka Toshiteno Rodokuho" (Recitation as an Academic Subject), Tsubouchi stressed his belief that both literature and aesthetics, including drama activities, had the potential to contribute to the cultivation of human sentiment if they were "applied with appropriate caution" (8). He contended:

Nevertheless, in order to follow the proper sequence, one should initiate this process first by learning to attain an aesthetically critical view of literary works. For example, one should begin with developing the ability to analyze the characters of the play, to empathize with the characters' emotional state, to demonstrate those emotions (thus skill of expression) and the like. One must be trained in these disciplines (8).

Tsubouchi emphasized the importance of a process that laid a sound foundation, stating, "Dramatic performance without the foundation will either end up being disorganized, contemptible drama or turn into despicable imitative trifles" (8).

Here, Tsubouchi was shifting his main concern toward the process as well as its quality as if to dodge public criticism. In the same article, he insisted that in order to achieve this goal, the recitation class should be incorporated into a

secondary school program because it promoted "the critical view of aesthetics as well as knowledge of language and rhetoric" (8-9). By stressing the effect of emotional cultivation in recitation study, Tsubouchi maintained that the recitation study was thereby "far more productive than unprepared, impulsively conducted shallow drama" (9).

It is worthy of attention that Tsubouchi began to overtly focus on the preparatory process of drama by stressing its educational aspect. This shift in orientation to the process was based upon Tsubouchi's strong conviction of the educational significance of drama; it also had significance as a strategic appeal to society for the legitimate use of drama. This marked a turning point wherein Tsubouchi's cautious treatment of dramatic activities affected even the field of adult theatre. He became very conscious of how to manage activities as well as how the people involved should behave so that none of them could become a target of societal criticism.

For example, when his Recitation Study Group, Ekifu-Kai evolved into the formation of a theatre group called the Bungei Kyokai (Literary Society) in 1906, Tsubouchi intentionally founded this group independent of Waseda University so no responsibility would fall on the university. After the formation of the Second Bungei Kyokai in 1909, he established a training department to which he invited amateurs, many of whom had no previous acting experience. This was the first coed actor training school in Japan to be made up of amateurs. The department curriculum stressed academic discipline and employed various innovative classes such as "modern drama" and "English conversation," in addition to such academic classes as psychology and philosophy, thus emphasizing the foundational study he insisted on in "Gakka toshiteno Rodokuho."

The most conspicuous example of his attempt to rid his dramatic activity of the negative aspect of theatre during this training period can be seen by his control of dramatic, academic, and moral life of his students, even dictating the activities he expected them to follow during their private daily life. He even imposed a dating prohibition among the students. One couple was expelled from the school after being discovered to be walking under one umbrella (Matsumoto 46).

Although this example may seem extreme, it becomes understandable if we recognize the situation of these actors. To illustrate how skeptical the public

view against drama was at this time, despite Tsubouchi's efforts, Taro Akiba related a discussion he had with Shigetoshi Kawatake, who had participated in Tsubouchi's first production of *Hamlet* in the Second Bungei Kyokai in 1911. When Akiba questioned why he could not find Kawatake's name in the program of *Hamlet*, Kawatake confessed that his mother had forbidden him to use his real name in the program; therefore, he had no choice but to be listed under a false name, Tozo Satake (Inagaki and Oka 287). Akiba reported that it was not only Kawatake's mother but also many other parents of Tsubouchi's students who came to Tsubouchi begging that he not let their children "imitate actors" (287). The fact that Tsubouchi acquiesced to their wishes illustrates how desperate he was not to have any negative aspect of his dramatic activity pointed out by the public.

Tsubouchi's Stance in the Field of Education

Around the time that Tsubouchi shifted his direction to the process-oriented operation of drama, he was also involved in middle school education and the creation of *The Reader*, the compilation of the National Textbook. In 1897, a publisher, Fuzanbo, asked him to create elementary school textbooks, and in 1900, Tsubouchi published his first text, *Kokugo Dokuhon (The Reader)*. Tsubouchi's policy both in ethics teaching and compilation of *The Reader* shows how his educational principles toward children had already been fostered and shaped by this time. Specifically, the basic educational attitude that became the backbone of Tsubouchi's future child drama activity, including age specific appropriateness and his preference of triggering methodology over imposition of knowledge, had already been established. In addition, Tsubouchi constantly attempted to incorporate a dramatic approach to both his teaching and the Reader creation – this also forecasted his future child drama endeavor.

Tsubouchi was invited to be the vice-principal of Waseda Middle School when it was established in 1896. He began teaching practical ethics at the school (while continuing his lectures at Tokyo Senmon Gakko). According to Tsubouchi, the process of finding material for his texts stimulated him to conduct his first research on elementary school education and made him aware of problematic issues inherent in contemporary educational policy. After conducting research on the status quo of elementary education by visiting a few

elementary schools, Tsubouchi maintained:

For the first time, I discovered that there were many defects and misunderstandings both in their educational policy and textbooks. I felt a sense of righteous indignation wherein I even thought that I should devote myself to the reformation of educational programs by assuming the position of principal of a private elementary school (“Toyokan kara Fuzanbo e” 109)

This new research marked a turning point for his interest in children's literature and became a foundational step for his future work in child drama. According to Tsubouchi, he first became interested in children's literature around 1900 while he was editing the *Elementary School Reader* series (16 volumes for boys and girls each) for the Fuzanbo Publisher (Tsubouchi, “Shogen” 2). Thus, both the teaching and the textbook creation were an important preparation phase for his future child drama activity.

In the article “Houkonno Shouchugakko niokeru Tokuike Oyobi sono Hei” (“The Present Condition of Ethics Education in Elementary/Middle Schools and Its Drawback”), Tsubouchi discussed his philosophy in the context of his discovery of the conditions in elementary and middle school education. Acknowledging his lack of experience in child education, he began to visit middle and elementary schools and devoured books both on ethics and education. He concluded that ethics education both in elementary and middle schools was “too formalistic, utilitarian, as well as shallow, thus, very superficial” (3).

First, in his comments on the way in which the *Kyoikuchokugo* (Imperial Rescript on Education)³ was being taught, Tsubouchi pointed out that only a cursory knowledge of loyalty and filial piety was discussed in class. He contended:

They [teachers] are simply ordering the children to obey the teaching of loyalty and filial piety, without any attempt to trigger moral spirit. What they [teachers] are attempting is only to mold children's moral character inculcating superficial knowledge about loyalty and filial piety (3-4)

He criticized education's completely authoritative methodology, insisting on the importance of encouraging children's initiative and motivation.

Second, he criticized the current educational methodology, indicating how the teachers' reinforcement of loyalty and filial piety was founded on such

self-centered utilitarian motivation as “the sake of social obligation” or “to attain good social reputation”; thus, it was not based on sincerity (5). Deploring such motivations, Tsubouchi maintained, “In this regard, I cannot help but cast blame upon Mr. Fukuzawa’s influence [of utilitarian teaching]” (6).

In a third comment, Tsubouchi indicated the importance of age-appropriateness for the texts. Because educators were using only the original texts of Confucianism for all age groups, Tsubouchi insisted, “The original Confucian texts should only be used for normal school⁴ or higher age groups.” He further maintained:

The Discourses of Confucius, though it should be of immutable value to both teachers and other intellectuals, should not be taught directly to young children. It is like offering hard beef or mutton to babies without canine teeth, because the text only would be truly worthwhile when used with some empirical knowledge (6-7).

He insisted that each age group should have its own textbook with appropriately selected content.

Finally, Tsubouchi discussed the practical methodology of primary education. He contended that it was insufficient to impose mere memorization of lofty ideals on children, insisting that they should be led to practice the ideals within the range of their familiar daily activities. He further elaborated that such ideals discussed in the *Kyoikuchokugo* (Imperial Rescript on Education) should be considered the end result of the lifelong endeavor; therefore, it was important to proceed in an educationally legitimate order. He contended, “This ideal status should be attained gradually following the right process” (9). In addition, Tsubouchi insisted upon the foremost importance of practical execution of educational content accusing present teachers of lecturing on “what they themselves have not even practiced in actuality” (10).

When we compare these educational assertions with the claims of his child drama, it is evident that they lie on the same continuum. In both endeavors, Tsubouchi asserted four ideals. First, the policies of both the conventional child drama before Tsubouchi and ethics education were based on authoritative infusion, and attempted to mold children into an adult ideal. This should be replaced by valuing children’s initiative, and therefore triggered by the learning. Second, neither of these endeavors should be motivated by utilitarian reasons such as reputation enhancement or obligation (or money making and

self-complacency in case of child drama), but must come purely from sincerity. Third, children's ages and cognitive levels should be taken into consideration when using materials either in drama or ethics. Finally, Tsubouchi thought it was very important that children be led step by step to the ideal result by a carefully conceived process, beginning with familiar matters through to actual practice with adult facilitation.

Thus, it is clear that the spirit or the basic attitude of his child drama had already begun to form at this time; Tsubouchi's involvement in middle school education and his child drama activity were part of the materialization of his educational ethics.

Tsubouchi's Policy for Textbook Creation

During the process of his textbook creation, Tsubouchi also employed the same principles as in the ethics teaching. The importance of prompting children's initiative in learning, the danger of "forced" knowledge, age and cognitive considerations, and even dramatic approaches were all constantly stressed in the creation process, anticipating his future child drama theory. The textbooks published in 1900 consisted of eight volumes of *Kokugo Dokuhon Jinjo Shogakko Yo (Reader for Ordinary Elementary School)* and eight volumes of *Kokugo Dokuhon Koto Shogakko Yo (Reader for Higher Elementary School)*.⁵

In the foreword of the first volume, as well as in its "Points of Editing," Tsubouchi expressed the basic purposes of the textbook. According to him, there were "direct purposes" and "indirect purposes" of textbook-based teaching. As "the direct purpose," Tsubouchi contended that the teachers should use the textbook to 1) invest children with the ability to speak well, read well, and compose sentences well, 2) equip them with the foundation of common knowledge, and 3) cultivate their moral and aesthetic character (*Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon Hashigaki* 691). "The indirect purpose" was to "trigger children's minds so that they voluntarily start and continue reading" after "learning the joy and the benefit of reading" (691); he maintained that this was as important as the "direct purpose". Thus, he insisted upon the importance of a textbook to effectively cultivate the pupils' interest in reading. Regarding the quality of conventional textbooks, he contended that because they overstressed the second direct purpose - the knowledge foundation - they became prosaic in

their quality, thus discouraging a desirable effect on children (691-692).

Tsubouchi then discussed the criteria for his selection of the materials in the Readers. He had selected material that was age-appropriate and would gain students' interest ("*Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon Hensan Yoshi*" 698). He maintained that, even among the Japanese traditional fairy tales, it was important to be very selective, and he carefully considered the content's spiritual influence on children (698). Tsubouchi also revealed his policy of consideration for the children's level of both intellectual and emotional cognitive capabilities in the distribution of the materials.

Next Tsubouchi discussed the six principles upon which he based his choice of material to be included in his textbooks. His primary concern lay in the text's appeal to children. He thought that the most dreadful outcome would be to present prosaic or dull materials. In order to appeal to children's curiosity, Tsubouchi aimed at "describing things so that events in the story sounded so lively that children would feel they were actually witnessing those events." Second, children's language was used so the words sounded natural, lively, and as close to reality as possible. Third, by using "as many allegories as possible," in order to appeal to children's intuitive knowledge, the stories aimed at cultivating their minds. Fourth, in order to avoid rote learning, his texts were written to trigger children's learning on their own initiative. Fifth, he attempted to insert practical knowledge into the entertaining materials. As the sixth principle, he treasured the rhythm of language, writing some of the materials in song form and utilizing simple, yet natural language so children could recite and learn easily. Thus, they would remember necessary names as well as the feeling of the content (702-3). Theoretically, all these principles had been made from a child's viewpoint with consideration to the appeal, cognitive level, and even the musicality of the language, all of which resonated as ideals in his child drama.

Even more interesting was the manner in which Tsubouchi drew on many dramatic factors in order to carry out his ideals both in ethics education and the Reader creation. A dramatic factor seems to have infiltrated his teaching style. For example, in his teaching of ethics, Tsubouchi was reported to have devoted himself to presenting "concrete, familiar, and interesting examples," sometimes acting them out himself in such an entertaining way that children could comprehend the concept. This was in contrast to the traditional

ethics class in which teachers spent most of their time explaining abstract concepts (Inagaki and Oka 336). Chikara Igarashi, then a pupil of Tsubouchi, recollected, "... in the ethics class, our teacher [Tsubouchi] used to teach class, following such styles as Confucius's dialogue with students, Buddha's preaching, and Socrates' art of midwifery incorporating his unique dramatic expression on top of it; it was really entertaining, and at the same time, of highly refined quality ..." (S. Kawatake and Yanagita 305). Indeed, a dramatic factor seems to have infiltrated his teaching style.

Regarding the quality of Tsubouchi's Reader, Toshio Inoue, the editor and the commentator of *Kokugo Kyoiku Shiryo: Kyokasho Shi (Documents of History of Japanese Language Education)*, contended that Tsubouchi's reader, which was designed for ordinary elementary schools, could be characterized as simplified by lively language. He described the language of Volume 1 as "free and spirited" and that of Volumes 2 and above as "bearing increased colloquial expressions" (129). As to the content of material as a whole, Inoue maintained that "the amount of knowledge infusion is decreased compared to the textbook readers of other publishers" and that even in scientific materials there was "frequent use of literary expressions, like personifications, which were derived from children's interest and daily experiences" (129).

Within the content of the materials created by Tsubouchi, dialogue-based short materials containing many playful make-believe game elements such as *Akinai Goto (Shopping Scene at a Store)* and *Tegami (A Letter)* stood out. For example, the Shueido Publisher had used a textbook that contained the same thematic material as Tsubouchi's *Akinai Goto* titled *Akinai no Asobi (Shopping Game)*, a short skit in which a brother and a sister interact as a fruit shop owner and a customer. A comparison of these two similar stories reveals how Tsubouchi filled his story with many playful elements. For example, Tsubouchi's *Akinai Goto* used daily objects for pretending props; the leaves of camellia were used as money and Japanese apricots as their merchandise fruit (17-8). The other story did not use props.⁶ Moreover, the language was much more casual in Tsubouchi's skit. For example, "how much" was expressed in such colloquial expression as "Ikura desu ka?" (17), which is used even now as colloquial language, while the other skit used the expression, "Ikura de arimasuka?" (*Akinai no Asobi* 19), formalized language used by adults.

Another example is Tsubouchi's *Momotaro (The Peach Boy)* in an

ordinary elementary school textbook. A textbook published by Kokko Sha also took up *Momotaro*. While the Kokko Sha's version of *Momotaro* was presented in a simple narrative form (Kokko Sha 56-62), Tsubouchi's *Momotaro* included many dialogues among the narrative attempting to make it more theatrical and more interesting to the children (Tsubouchi, 25-6).

Tsubouchi's textbook for higher elementary school also contained many "dramatic elements" including elements such as a simplified Noh song, *Hagoromo*, or the simplified Noh story, *Ataka*. Kisaburo Akita, pointing out these dramatic elements, stated, "Indeed, as might be expected from the leading drama practitioner, it [the textbook] must have been compiled from his dramatist's view point and ideas. It is very interesting because these elements correspond to Tsubouchi's policy and stories in his later child drama endeavor" (250).

In addition to these factors, Tsubouchi's adherence to his sixth principle for choosing materials reveals his belief in the necessity of dramatic elements. Because he recognized the importance of language and, in particular, the tone of language, he published some of his materials in song form to facilitate easy recitation and memorization. This resonates with his recitation teaching policy, which he favored as the preparation step to drama activity.

Finally, it is worthy of special attention that, among the materials in these textbooks, there are several themes and stories that were developed into drama later in Tsubouchi's child drama collection such as, *Kateiyo Jidogeki* (*Child Drama for Domestic Presentation- Play Collection*) and *Gakkoyo Shou Kyakuhon* [*A Short Play Collection for School Presentation*]. The following table provides a list of the stories and plays that correspond to the later plays in his child drama activity, revealing how his research on children at this time became the essential foundation for his later drama creation.

Takeshi Kimura, one of Tsubouchi's former pupils who had once used Tsubouchi's *Reader* in elementary school, succinctly analyzed the connection between Tsubouchi's readers and his child drama endeavor. Kimura reported that a story from the reader, "*Sanwa no Chou*" ("The Three Butterflies", Vol. 7, Chap. 9) which was originally written in operetta style was later republished along with musical notes by the same publisher and was often seen performed both at schools and churches (Inagaki and Oka 313). He further stated:

[Much later] when we heard that Mr. Tsubouchi had begun his child

Table 1. List of Stories in Tsubouchi's Reader that Correspond to His Later Child Drama.

Title of Tsubouchi's Drama (Title of Play Collection)	Story in Tsubouchi Reader (Reader/Volume/Chapter)	Original Source
<i>Gold Touch</i> (<i>Kateiyo</i> Vol. 1)	<i>Gold Touch</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 6, Ch. 18, 19)	<i>Midas Touch</i>
<i>Eight Headed Snake Dragon</i> (<i>Kateiyo</i> Vol. 1)	<i>Prince God, Susano.</i> (<i>Higher</i> , Vol. 1, Ch. 4)	<i>Amaterasu and her brother Susano</i> from <i>Kojiki</i>
<i>Meeting of Little Mice</i> (<i>Kateiyo</i> Vol. 2)	<i>Discussion of Little Mice.</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 3, Ch. 6)	<i>Little Mice Plan to Bell the Cat</i> by Aesop
<i>Dokan and Kakezara</i> (<i>Gakkoyo</i>)	<i>Story of Osbin,</i> (<i>Higher</i> , Vol. 1, Ch. 21, 22)	<i>Ota Dokan: Story of Ochikubo</i> (Anon.)
<i>A Hat Maker and Monkeys</i> (<i>Gakkoyo</i>)	<i>Ten Monkeys</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 1, p. 27)	Noh Play, <i>Eboshi Ori</i> And Noh Song, <i>Seisei</i>
<i>A Pretentious Crow.</i> (<i>Kateiyo</i> Vol. 3)	<i>Crow.</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 3, Ch.22)	<i>The Jay and the Peacock</i> by Aesop
<i>Haughty Weathercock</i> (<i>Kateiyo</i> Vol. 3)	<i>Weathercock.</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 3, Ch. 16)	Unknown
<i>Little Masatsura</i> (<i>Shoyo Senshu</i> Vol. 9)	<i>Kusunoki Masatsura</i> (<i>Ordinary</i> , Vol. 6, Ch. 7)	<i>Onna Kusunoki</i> by Monzaemon Chikamatsu.

Source: Tsubouchi, *Kateiyo Jidogeki* (vol. 1, 2, 3), *Gakkoyo Shou Kyakuhon*, *Shoyo Senshu* (*Shoyo Anthology* Vol. 9), *Kokugo Dokuhon Jinjo Shogakko Yo* (*Reader for Ordinary Elementary School*), and *Kokugo Dokuhon Koto Shogakko Yo* (*Reader for Higher Elementary School*).

drama, I knew immediately by intuition that it was something of this kind [something similar to the productions of *The Three Butterflies*]... I am quite convinced that he already had his idea of child drama in mind as early as the 30th year of Meiji (1897) (313).

This remark, coming from Tsubouchi's own pupil who had earlier studied *The Reader*, is a convincing indication of the relevance between Tsubouchi's *Reader* and later child drama. At the same time, this remark reveals how much his textbooks, as well as his teaching, had an impact on his pupils, as it was still remembered over seventy years later.

Conclusion

Tsubouchi's ideas both in theory and in implementation, although controversial, were very innovative. In particular, some of the theories remain as the foundational ideas for ideal child drama. Thus far, I have examined how much of the foundational policy and philosophy of Tsubouchi's child drama had already been nurtured and formed in his early days. As seen in the discussion, his ideas were affected by many complex issues: (1) his personal experiences with his students both in Ekifu-Kai and Bungei Kyokai, (2) his research on education and school's status quo, (3) his textbook formation, and (4) the conventional anti-dramatic social climate that would not allow the involvement of ordinary people in dramatic activity. As Tsubouchi formed his ideas, he was adapting his drama to the world in which he lived.

It is evident that these endeavors were the result of his adaptation to conventional public opinion, which had long been antipathetic to dramatic activities. By shifting his attitude of dramatic pursuit from product-oriented to more process-oriented activities, Tsubouchi had hoped somehow to incorporate elements of drama into school education while at the same time dodging public criticism. In other words, these dramatic elements were already being developed during his process-seeking years.

Thus, it is appropriate to say that his effort toward triggering children's learning initiative in school formed the major foundation of his later child drama philosophy. This contention is supported by information about both his ethics teaching policy and textbook creation, including original materials in the textbook that were later incorporated into his child drama collection. Tsubouchi was also constantly seeking a chance to incorporate actual drama materials into school. We have seen some of the actual drama appearing in his *Reader* as well as in his ethics teaching.

It was quite natural that Tsubouchi had agreed to the idea of child drama performed by children before 1900, as Iwaya reported in his article. However, while Iwaya, as chief editor of a publishing company, had somewhat more freedom to idealize child drama, Tsubouchi was realistic about the negative attitude of society against dramatic activity, having been the recipient of criticism as both theatre practitioner and educator. This difference in their situations determined the different paths they were to travel. Iwaya started

experimenting with his ideas of child drama in his magazines, while Tsubouchi, as an educator, attempted to utilize dramatic elements as educational tools while continuously seeking the chance to materialize his ideal drama activity.

It was also true that in regard to the concrete approaches and measures he used to realize his ideals, such as age-appropriateness and triggering children's initiative learning attitude in the child drama, he had to wait until later in the Taisho era when the time was ripe and he could use source material from his American predecessors in order to bolster his original ideas.

In conclusion, I refer to Thomas Postlewait's notion that "Historical events reside in no one place: not in the specific past, nor the documents, nor the codes and discourses, nor the history books, nor the historians, nor the readers of history, but instead in a complex and dynamic interrelationship among all these historical locations of meaning" (178). He also believed that, "Theatre is not a self-contained, aesthetic enterprise. It always occurs within the shaping, often determining, influences of political, economic, social, ethical, educational, and aesthetic systems and ideas" (165). I contend that Tsubouchi and his child drama activity were no exception to this. Thus, I have demonstrated the sometimes circuitous path Shoyo Tsubouchi had to travel in order to bring his ground-breaking concept of "Kateiyo Jidogeki" to acceptance, first within the Japanese educational establishment, and then, to the public as a whole.

Bibliography

- Akinai no Asobi* [*Shopping Game*], *Shinsen Teikoku Dokuhon* [*Newly Selected Imperial Reader*] 3. 19. Ed. Gakkai Shishin Sha. Tokyo: Shueido, 1901. 19-20.
- Akita, Kisaburo. *Shoto Kyoiku Kokugo Kyokasho Hattatsushi* [*Development of Elementary Japanese Reader*]. Hiroshima: Bunkahyoron Shuppan, 1977.
- Ichijima, Kenkichi. "Tokyo Senmon Gakko Bungakuka no Sosetsu" [Establishment of Literature Department at the Tokyo Senmon Gakko]. *Waseda Gakuo*. Rpt. in *Shoyo Senshu* [*Shoyo Anthology*]. Vol. 12. Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1927. Supplement 3-6.
- Ichikawa, Kenichi. "Tsubouchi Shoyo no Jidogeki Riron: Alice Minnie Herts no Jido Kyoikugekijo wo Chushin Toshite" [Shoyo Tsubouchi's Theory of Child Drama: With Focus on It's Relation to Alice Minnie Herts's Children's Educational Theatre]. *Engkigaku* [*Studies on Theatre Arts*] 2. (1960): 66-82.
- Inagaki, Tatsuro, and Yasuo Oka, eds. *Zadankai Tsubouchi Shoyo Kenkyu* [*Discussion: Study of Shoyo Tsubouchi*]. Tokyo: Kindai Bunka Kenkyujo, 1976.
- Inoue, Toshio, et al., eds. *Kokugo Kyouikushi Shiryo II: Kyokasho Shi* [*Documents of History of Japanese Language Education II: History of Readers*]. Tokyo: Tokyo Horei Shuppan,

1981.

- Iwaya Sazanami. "Doitsu no Otogishibai" [Fairy Tale Drama in Germany]. *Kabuki* 32 (1903): 1-4.
- Kawatake, Shigetoshi, and Izumi Yanagida. *Tsubouchi Shoyo*. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1939.
- Kawatake, Toshio. "Jidogeki ni Okeru Tsubouchi Shoyo" [Shoyo Tsubouchi in the field of Child Drama]. *Sogo Sekai Bungei [The World Literature]* Vol. 16. Tokyo: Risosha, 1959. 69-79.
- Kitami, Harukazu. *Tetteki to Shunsho – Kindaiengi no Hajimari [Tetteki and Shunsho – The beginning of Modern Acting]*. Tokyo: Shobunsha, 1978.
- Kokko Sha, ed. *Momotaro [The Peach Boy]*. *Jinjo Shogaku Kokubo Dokubon [Reader for Ordinary Elementary School]*. 3. 27, 28. Tokyo: Kokko Sha, 1900. 56-62.
- Koyama, Shizuko. *Kodomotachi no Kindai: Gakko Kyoiku to Katei Kyoiku [Modern Age for Children: School Education and Home Education]*. Rekishi Bunka Raiburari 143. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2002.
- Matsumoto, Kappei. *Nihon Shingekishi: Shingeki Binbou Monogatari [History of Japanese Modern Theatre: Story of Struggling Actors]*. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1966.
- Minakuchi, Biyo. "Ekifukai Jidai no Sensei" [Mr. Tsubouchi at the Time of Ekifukai]. *Waseda Bungaku* 244 (1926): 41-45.
- "Niigata Shihan Gakkono Engeki Jiken wa Ronzuruni Tarazu" [Niigata Normal School's Issue Has been Overblown]. *Taiyo* 4. 6. (1898): 42-43.
- Postlewait, Thomas. "Histroriography and the Theatrical Event: A Primer with Twelve Cruxes." *Theatre Journal* 43 (1991): 157-178.
- Tsubouchi, Shoyo [Yuzo]. *Akinai Goto [Shopping Scene at a Store]*. *Kokugo Dokubon Jinjo Shogakko Yo [Reader for Ordinary Elementary School]* 3. 15. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1900. 17-18.
- . *Ataka [Barrier at Ataka]*. *Kokugo Dokubon Koto Shogakko Yo [Reader for Higher Elementary School]*. 8. 19. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1900. 46-50.
- . "Gakka toshiteno Rodokuho" [Recitation Technique as A School Subject]. *Waseda Bungaku* 8 (1898): 8-9.
- . "Gakko ni okeru Gakusei no Engeki" [Student Performance in the School Setting]. *Waseda Bungaku* 8 (1898): 3-8.
- . *Gakkoyo Shou Kyakubon [A Short Play Collection for School Presentation]*. Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1923.
- . *Hagoromo [Legendary Robe of Feathers]*. *Kokugo Dokubon Koto Shogakko Yo [Reader for Higher Elementary School]*. 6. 12. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1900. 27-30.
- . "Houkonno Shouchugakko niokeru Tokuiku oyobi sono Hei" [Present Condition of Ethics Education in Elementary/Middle Schools and Its Drawback]. *Waseda Bungaku* 7 (1898): 24-35. Rpt. in *Shoyo Senshu [Shoyo Anthology]* Vol. 6. Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1926. 3-13.
- . *Kateiyo Jidogeki. [Child Drama for Domestic Presentation I]* Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1922.
- . *Kateiyo Jidogeki Dai Ni Shu [Child Drama for Domestic Presentation II]*. Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1923.
- . *Kateiyo Jidogeki Dai San Shu [Child Drama for Domestic Presentation III]* Tokyo: Waseda

Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1924.

- . *Momotaro* [*The Peach Boy*]. *Kokugo Dokuhon Jinjo Shogakko Yo* [*Reader for Ordinary Elementary School*] 3rd ed. 2. 25, 26. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1900. 23-27. in Chapter 25 and 26 of Volume 2 for an ordinary elementary school textbook
- . "Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon Hashigaki" [Foreword for *Elementary School Reader*]. *Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon* [*Elementary School Reader*]. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1901. Rpt. in *Shoyo Senshu* [*Shoyo Anthology*] separate Vol. 3. Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1977. 691-694.
- . "Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon Hensan Yoshi" [Policy of Editing for *Elementary School Reader*]. *Shogaku Kokugo Dokuhon* [*Elementary School Reader*]. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1901. Rpt. in *Shoyo Senshu* [*Shoyo Anthology*] separate Vol. 3. Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1977. 695-710.
- . "Shogen" [Preface]. *Shoyo Senshu* [*Shoyo Anthology*] Vol. 9. Tokyo: Shunyodo, 1926. 1-2.
- . *Tegami* [*A Letter*]. *Kokugo Dokuhon Jinjo Shogakko Yo* [*Reader for Ordinary Elementary School*] 3. 10. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1900. 12-3.
- . "Toyokan kara Fuzanbo e" [From Toyokan to Fuzanbo]. *Fuzanbo* [*Fuzanbo Publisher*]. Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1932. 106-118.

¹ All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

² Despite people's prejudice and contempt against actors, it was not taboo to take pleasure in talking about or even going to see professional dramatic performances with family members, including children. Shizuko Koyama contended that, at least until the late Meiji Era, household conduct, such as "taking children to see [what is thought to be] 'vulgar' plays or variety shows, singing worldly folk songs [usually of love affairs] or playing the shamisen or koto [the songs and musical instruments that are associated with 'pleasure quarters']... had been quite ordinary Japanese customary habits" (130). Indeed, for Tsubouchi and his mother, too, it was natural to go to see or discuss dramatic productions with household members so long as the production was done by professional players -- "riverbed beggars." It is fair to say that, in actuality, play appreciation was tacitly left to the private discretion of an individual family.

³ *Kyoikuchokugo* was issued one year after the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution in 1890. It clarified the national morals and the principles of national education strictly based upon modern nationalism and Confucian familism with its emphasis on such ethics as "chukun aikoku" (loyalty to the emperor and patriotism) and "chuko icchi" (integration of loyalty and filial piety)."

⁴ Generally normal school started after elementary education; however, in fact, it varied from locale to locale around this time.

⁵ The duration of education in "Jinjo Shogakko" (Ordinary Elementary School) at this time varied from six to nine years depending on area. Some of the pupils would then go on to "Koto Shogakko" (Higher elementary school) for about four years but that number seems also to have varied from area to area.

⁶ For Gakkai Shishin Sha Publisher's *Akinaino Asobi*, see Toshio Inoue 119.