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As a graduate student in the late 1980s, I conducted research on Soviet pedagogy. From the post-World War II period until 1980s, Soviet pedagogy and psychology had a strong influence on Japanese educational research, and many works by A. N. Leont'ev, V. V. Davydov, and others were translated and published in Japanese. In this context, I studied Soviet pedagogy while conducting empirical research on concrete pedagogical practices in Japanese schools. However, the acceptance of Soviet pedagogy and psychology in Japan during that period was insufficient for fully grasping cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) as a new research paradigm with its systematic, coherent, and well-formulated set of core concepts and principles.

The turning point for me was learning about an international scientific society on activity theory—the International Society for Cultural Research and Activity Theory (ISCRAT), the predecessor of the current International Society for Cultural-historical Activity Research (ISCAR)—and reading Professor Yrjö Engeström's 1991 article, 'Activity theory and individual and social transformation,' published in the *Multidisciplinary Newsletter for Activity Theory*, 7/8. This paper vividly captured the core concept of activity theory, object-oriented activity, which overcomes six dichotomies. I was profoundly influenced by this paper. I attended the 3rd International Congress of the ISCRAT in Moscow in June 1995, where I met Professor Engeström and heard his keynote address. During this congress, I

directly asked him about the third dichotomy (instrumental tool-mediated production versus expressive sign-mediated communication) discussed in his paper. I raised this question because I was grappling with this opposing standpoint, which I had encountered while reading Russian literature at the time.

Since then, I have been fortunate to consistently and continuously study the collective human creativity generated through collaborative engagement in education and learning as an object-oriented practical activity. By situating myself within the evolving movement of activity theory, which has a broad interdisciplinary nature, I have examined new forms of educational activities as collaborative interventions in expanding learning. This work is grounded in the framework of activity theory and its interventionist methodology. Through these studies, I received the European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) “That’s Interesting!” Award in 2013.

Recently, I have been working on Change Laboratory intervention research in formal education. I aim to promote Change Laboratory research within the established public education system to develop formative interventions aligned with fourth-generation activity theory. The fourth-generation activity theory seeks to create alternatives to capitalism by transforming activity systems to address global crises and threats to human survival. Implementing fourth-generation Change Laboratory interventions in schools presents a significant challenge of transforming the entire school as an activity system. Additionally, it requires the development of innovative alternatives to marketization and privatization under neoliberal pressures that prioritize measurable learning outcomes, such as academic test scores.

My colleagues and I have undertaken two types of Change Laboratory interventions. One involves teachers and interventionist researchers collaborating in elementary schools in Japan for shaping the future of education. The other focuses on Change Laboratories for high school students, their teachers, and interventionist researchers at public high schools in Japan, where students collaboratively design community-based projects based on their interests to serve the common good. Such Change Laboratories in schools, guided by fourth-generation activity theory, encourage participants to move into an alternative developmental orientation of learning and instruction in schools, fostering de-encapsulation and the formation of community-based coalitions for learning.

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