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Yamana, Jun

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【翻訳】Pedagogical Semantics Formation through Translation:

The role of the German concept of *Bildung* in shaping Japanese pedagogy

「陶冶」と「人間形成」：ビルドゥング（*Bildung*）をめぐる教育学的な意味世界の構成

YAMANA Jun *

山名 淳

(* Professor of Interfaculty Initiative in Information Studies, The University of Tokyo, Japan)

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Introduction

This presentation will examine how the translation of the German term *Bildung* has influenced pedagogical semantics, using Japanese pedagogy as a case study.¹

The translation of *Bildung* into another language is often profoundly problematic. As Clemens Menze noted, it is actually impossible to translate the term, with its multiple and varied meanings, with any single foreign term (Menze 1983: 351). Interestingly, however, when the translation of *Bildung* is attempted, the meaning of the concept can change, differentiate, and resystematize itself in the target language in its cultural context.

This presentation explores the difficulties encountered in translating *Bildung* into Japanese, especially in the field of Japanese pedagogy, and the strategies that have emerged to deal with these difficulties, with consideration of the significance of such efforts in the context of pedagogical semantics in Japan.

In general, 教養 (*kyōyō*) is considered to be the most accurate Japanese single-term translation of *Bildung*, and is the most frequently discussed translation across disciplines. However, this presentation will focus on two other words: 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*). As will be explained below, these two terms highlight the process rather than result of *Bildung*. In this respect, they have often been utilized, especially by educational researchers, as components in investigations into pedagogical knowledge and thought patterns regarding the *Bildung* process.

It can be suggested, however, that the term *Bildung* has not only contributed to the establishment of Japanese pedagogy as a discipline, but also caused semantic confusion in this pedagogy. Today, little attention is paid in Japanese educational studies to the confusion that has

crept into Japanese pedagogical semantics as a result of the translation of the German concept; and without knowing the root of this confusion, education is currently being talked about and discussed in Japan without consideration of whether the terminology being used is properly aligned among the discussants. Only by examining the history of translations of *Bildung* and the associated shifts in meaning can the coherence of the semantics of Japanese pedagogy be more accurately verified.

The presentation is divided into five sections. After this introduction, *tōya* and *keisei* are briefly located in the spectrum of Japanese translation possibilities for *Bildung* (Section 1). Then, the genesis and development of *tōya* (Section 2) and *keisei* (Section 3) as translations for *Bildung* are examined. At the same time, the coherence (or incoherence) of the semantics of pedagogy in Japan will be considered. In addition, changes in the connotation of the concept of *Bildung* in Germany will be outlined, followed by discussion of how such changes can also be related to the semantics of Japanese educational science (Section 4). Finally, I will note some further points that seem important to me regarding the question of *Bildung* and translation.

1. Overview of Japanese Translations of *Bildung* and Educational Semantics in Japan

The term *Bildung* seems to include multiple elements that cannot be retained under one term in non-German speaking cultures. As an English translator of a German philosophical essay writes, in English the term *Bildung* would be a complex of *formation*, *development*, *culture*, *self-cultivation*, and *education*. It must therefore be interpreted and translated differently depending on the context (Pickford in: Adorno 2005: 323). In this way, through translation, the term *Bildung* is broken down into

¹ This manuscript is based on an English translation of my paper (Yamana 2018) written in German.

its elements of meaning, and at the same time understood as the integration of these elements.

The English terms above could basically be translated into Japanese as follows.

culture

文化 (*bunka*) in the sense of human creation

教養 (*kyōyō*) in the sense of all-round humanity and its related knowledge and skills

education

教育 (*kyōiku*) in the sense of activities that lead others

self-cultivation

陶冶 (*tōya*) in the sense of self-training in relationships with masters and rivals

formation

形成 (*keisei*) in the sense of self-transformation

development

発達 (*hattatsu*) in the sense of physical and mental growth

As the French literary scholar Antoine Berman writes, the term *Bildung* includes both the process and result of personal transformation (Berman 2008: 92). Although many Japanese translation terms for *Bildung* are also ambiguous, and more or less contain both elements (process and result), it is possible to gain a sense of which words tend to highlight the process or result.

教養 (*kyōyō*), considered the most significant of all the possible Japanese translations of *Bildung*, focuses on the result of human transformation, at least in the contemporary context. In addition to 教養 (*kyōyō*), 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*), both regarded as relevant here, emphasize more the process of human transformation. Therefore, 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) are commonly used, especially in the educational field, where 文化 (*bunka*), 教育 (*kyōiku*), and 発達 (*hattatsu*) are also often found. However, other German words also tend to be associated with such Japanese words; for example, *Kultur* for 文化 (*bunka*), *Erziehung* for 教育 (*kyōiku*), and *Entwicklung* for 発達 (*hattatsu*). In view of such a constellation of Japanese words, the following focuses especially on 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*).

2. 陶冶 (*tōya*)

陶冶 (*tōya*) is a Chinese loanword in Japan. Originally, it meant to make porcelain (=陶) and to forge metals (=冶); in the context of Confucianism, however, this was reinterpreted metaphorically as referring to a person that elevates himself through his relationship with his teacher.

Presumably, the Japanese translation of *Bildung* was introduced by a pedagogical researcher. The Japanese researcher Motoichi Yuhara (1863-1931), who was recognized at the time as an important figure in the introduction of European pedagogy in the Meiji period through his translations of German writings, provides a glimpse of how the word 陶冶 (*tōya*) was incorporated into Japanese pedagogical semantics. He writes that the term was frequently used as a translation for *Bildung* at the turn of the 20th century, when Herbartianism was most intensively received in Japan. If his statement is reliable, it was Yuhara himself who first came up with the idea of using the Chinese word 陶冶 (*tōya*) as a translation for *Bildung* in Japan (Yuhara 1922: 186f.). He writes: “I was very pleased to see that the word 陶冶 (*tōya*) is so widely used nowadays, as if it had existed since ancient times” (Yuhara 1922: 187).

In Yuhara’s translator’s commentary on *Allgemeine Erziehungslehre* by Adolf Gustaf Lindner (1828-1887), he emphasizes that German has different etymological roots and a different grammar than Japanese, and therefore one cannot hope to fully capture the meaning of Lindner’s German text by translating word for word (Yuhara 1873: 1). Further, he suggests that it is not possible for Japanese to understand words, such as *Bildung*, which emerge from the Christian context. Given this, he notes that he will partly paraphrase Lindner’s book. Regarding *Bildung* itself, he developed the idea of transposing the meanings of the German word with another word from Confucian culture that sounds familiar to the Japanese: 陶冶 (*tōya*).

Since 陶冶 (*tōya*) became prevalent in Japanese pedagogical semantics, Japanese academicians, especially in the field of educational philosophy, have attempted to define the term 陶冶 (*tōya*) as *Bildung* in the sense of its classical philosophical meaning: positive transformation of the self and its world through their mutual relationship. The New Kantian-oriented educational philosopher Sukeichi Shinohara (1876-1957) exemplifies such tendencies in his writings. According to Shinohara, “陶冶 (*tōya*) in the pedagogical sense means, first, development

from within, as Friedrich Paulsen emphasizes. Second, 陶冶 (*tōya*) is promoted by the self-activities of students based on their characteristics. Third, it means “the development of the inner and spiritual being as a whole as unilaterally as possible” (Shinohara 1975: 84). It seems to me that such a translation and interpretation expresses a philosophy of *Bildung* and contributes to the establishment of pedagogical semantics in Japan at the same time.

After World War II, another trend emerged, which understood *Bildung* as a form of intellectual education. The educational researcher Taro Ogawa (1907-1974) utilized 陶冶 (*tōya*) as a synonym for intellectual education in the sense of Marxist theory. Ogawa contrasted the term 陶冶 (*tōya*) with the concept of 訓育 (*kun'iku*) as education for the holistic development of the individual (Ogawa 1963). Subsequently, this dichotomy between 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 訓育 (*kun'iku*) spread, especially in the field of school pedagogy. Here, however, confusion arose as 訓育 (*kun'iku*) was introduced as another word to translate the German *Bildung*, which is actually 陶冶 (*tōya*) in the field of educational philosophy. Some educational researchers actually changed their usage of 陶冶 (*tōya*) in the semantic confusion. The prominent school education researcher Matarō Kido, for example, had used the word 陶冶 (*tōya*) in the 1930s to mean “the relation of the producer to the produced” in terms of educational philosophy (Kido 1935: 996), but after World War II he used the same word to mean intellectual education in terms of the Marxist terminological usage.

Typically, in the departments of educational philosophy in Japanese faculties of education, it was and still is taught that 陶冶 (*tōya*) denotes the relationship between self and world, while school education researchers were and still are taught that the same word means intellectual education. In this respect, it can be said that there are different dialects regarding the term 陶冶 (*tōya*) within the educational field in Japan². As most university professors of education are not aware of the origin of such differences in meaning, and do not explain them in their lectures, the term 陶冶 (*tōya*) remains mysterious to students, whose resultant understanding is often far from correct. It is only through the archaeological investigation of educational semantics that it is possible to understand where this complexity in the concept of 陶冶 (*tōya*) comes from.

3. 形成 (*keisei*)

形成 (*keisei*) also deserves attention as an alternative translation of *Bildung*. 形成 (*keisei*) belongs to the Japanese colloquial language. Originally, 形 (*kei*) means “form”, and 成 (*sei*) means “to become” or “to make”. 形成 (*keisei*) thus means both “to make form” and “to take on form” at the same time.

In terms of the history of 形成 (*keisei*) in Japanese pedagogy, the term is notably found mainly in the so-called 京都学派 Kyoto school of philosophy, where its meaning was determined philosophically, and it thus became also a pedagogical term that was and is used synonymously with *Bildung*. The representative philosopher of the Kyoto school, Kitarō Nishida, already notes, in his 1933 essay “Philosophy and Education”, that “education is to be regarded as a kind of 形成 (*keisei*), so that people can be shaped in the same way as a woodcarver produces sculptures” (Nishida 1966 [1933]: 87).

However, Nishida imagines the process of 形成 (*keisei*) not rigidly but dynamically, conceiving of it as a “creative effect through the union of subjective and objective phenomenon, in which the appearance of the self can be made possible by the objective.” Focusing on a synonym of 形成 (*keisei*), 構成 (*kōsei*), he further notes that “構成する (*kōsei-suru*, constitute) is identified with 'bilden' [written in German]. It means 引き出す (*hikidasu*, pull out), i.e. 'erziehen' [written in German]” (Nishida 1966: 88).

Motomori Kimura, who developed his philosophically oriented pedagogical thoughts under the influence of Nishida, writes with regard to the meaning of 形成 (*keisei*) in his book 形成的自覚 (*keisei-teki-jikaku*, *Formative Self-consciousness*) (1941), that the German term *Bildung* originally meant to produce something form-like and therefore had an intrinsic relationship to the German term “Kultur,” which denoted something man-made as opposed to nature (Kimura 1941: 3f.). Thus, Kimura points out that 形成 (*keisei*) essentially refers to the relationship between self-cultivation and cultural production.

After the Second World War, *keisei* continued to be used, but increasingly together with other terms. In the field of pedagogy, instead of 形成 (*keisei*), the term 人間形成 (*ningen-keisei*) was now more commonly used. 人間 (*ningen*) means “human being.” Accordingly, the concept 人間形成 (*ningen-keisei*) is comparable to the concept of “human formation” in English. The influence of the Kyoto philosophical school's definition of the term 形成 (*keisei*)

² In this respect, the “futility of exegesis” (Tenorth 1997: 976) of *Bildung* in the course of translation attempts can also infect the non-German speaking world.

can also be traced in the last half of the 20th century. For example, the philosopher of education Takeshi Oura notes that he wanted to use the word 人間形成 (*ningen-keisei*) according to Kimura's determination (Oura 1950: 201).

The word 形成 (*keisei*) contains 形 (*kei*), meaning “shape,” as a component, and this has sometimes caused confusion about its usage. For example, it was said that the word 形成 (*keisei*) could be associated with people being shaped passively according to certain patterns. Therefore, critics have argued that 形成 (*keisei*) does not fit the term *Bildung*.

The greatest confusion, however, arose from the work of the prominent educational researcher Seiichi Miyahara, during World War II and under the influence of Ernst Kriek, who has been criticized as a representative ideologist of the NS-pedagogy. On the one hand, he used the term 形成 (*keisei*) as a translation of “Formung” (shaping); but on the other hand, he translated *Bildung* with the Japanese term 教育 (*kyōiku*), that is, “upbringing” (Miyahara 1940). In Miyahara's viewpoint, 形成 (*keisei*) means “shaping”; and in other contexts, such as those of Oura, the same word denotes *Bildung*. This phenomenon, similar to that of 陶冶 (*tōya*), can also be considered as a entangled dialectic regarding 形成 (*keisei*) within the educational discipline in Japan.

Generally speaking, the term 陶冶 (*tōya*) was once prevalent as a translation of *Bildung* in Japanese pedagogy, but after World War II, the frequency of use of 形成 (*keisei*) and 人間形成 (*ningen-keisei*) increased over time. The more broadly and frequently the word 形成 (*keisei*) was used, and the more it was used by different people in different contexts, the more difficult it became to see the precise relationship of the word to the concept of *Bildung*. There is a tendency to contrast the word 形成 (*keisei*) with the term 学校教育 (*kyōiku* or *gakkō-kyōiku*) or “(school) education”, which enables us to distinguish unintentional human formation (*keisei*) from intentional human formation (*kyōiku*), but without considering the origin of the pedagogical terms.

4. Change in the meaning of *Bildung* in Germany

As has been shown in the previous sections, two Japanese words - 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) - have often been used as translations for *Bildung* in Japanese pedagogy. An examination of their meaning and history reveals that *Bildung* has become intertwined with other terms such as “upbringing” and even “shaping” in

Japanese pedagogical semantics, through its translation into Japanese. Further complications arise from the fact that the connotation and denotation of 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) are closely related to when, by whom, with what social background, and out of what interest the term *Bildung* was translated into Japanese. These critical contextual factors are no longer clear in today's usage of the terms; and lack of knowledge regarding this semantic confusion has resulted in 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) currently being spoken of under the mistaken impression that there is broad, if not universal consensus about their meaning in each case.

Compounding this already complex situation, changes in the meaning of *Bildung* in Germany render the relationship between *Bildung* and 陶冶 (*tōya*) or 形成 (*keisei*) yet more complicated and uncertain. The change in the meaning of *Bildung* in the contemporary German context is addressed by Heiner Barz (2003), who utilizes data on the conception of *Bildung* from the Göttingen Studies (Strzelenwicz/Raapke/Schulenberg 1966) and the Oldenburg Studies (Schulenberg et al. 1979), to draw attention to a number of different change patterns in the last half of the 20th century. For example, they asked, “Do you know a person who you can say is *gebildet*?” and (if so), “Why do you think he is *gebildet*?” According to the results of the 1958 and 1973 surveys, “a strong shift in the conceptions of *Bildung* is evident” (Barz 2003: 11). The shift is summarized by Barz in the following manner:

Responses that invoke personal, affective, or character dimensions to characterize the *gebildete* person become less frequent (decline from 43% to 18%); responses that conceive of *Bildung* more strongly as a formal asset increase sharply (from 50% to 71%). This formal asset is available in the sense that it can be acquired and exploited as an instrument for specific purposes (Barz 2003: 11).

On the basis of the 1958 and 1973 studies and a more recent study of conceptions of *Bildung* conducted by himself, Barz schematically describes a progressive phase model of *Bildung*, beginning with a humanistic phase, and passing through the “instrumental” to the “postmodern” phase (Barz 2003: 16), which cannot be discussed in detail here. The key point is that the change in the meaning of *Bildung* seems to have been further accelerated by the trend toward globalization. Emphasizing the importance of the humanistic-philosophical theory of *Bildung*, Lothar Wigger sums up the current situation in exemplary

crisis-diagnostic terms as follows:

Sciences and practices of education in Germany are facing many new challenges and tasks: due to new political requirements of proving oneself in a globalized world, due to increased public expectations of the performance of the educational system in view of the results of international comparative studies of student performances, and due to societal changes such as the divergence of incomes, employment opportunities, and life chances. Efficiency and effectiveness are the benchmarks for reforming schools and universities, and *Bildung* is increasingly coming under the demands of utility and service to the economy (Wigger 2014: 1).

This flattening and instrumentalization of *Bildung* appears to make it difficult to specify the relationship between current conceptions of *Bildung*, and what people in Japan used to try to conceptualize using the terms 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*). In other words, the Japanese terms 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) have increasingly lost their reference to the original German terms and the status they seemed to have in Germany. In addition, the forces of globalization, also detectable in Japan, exercise increasing influence on the Japanese conception of *Bildung*. Some contemporary thinkers, including education researchers, find it difficult to imagine what used to be meant by the terms 陶冶 (*tōya*) or 形成 (*keisei*). At the moment, not only the reference of *Bildung* in the philosophical sense but also its counterpart in Japan is being forgotten; and in my view, the current disappearance and blurring of the multiple dimensions of *Bildung* can only be overcome by returning to the referral context that includes *Bildung*, 陶冶 (*tōya*) and 形成 (*keisei*) that had been established in the past. Efforts involving the semantic archaeology of *Bildung* as a heterolingual concept seem highly valuable and even necessary for the globalized world, to restore the thematization of the dynamic interaction between humans and the world.

5. Some remarks on “translation” in heterolingual worlds

Japanese philosopher Toshiaki Kobayashi considers the problems involved in using of the Japanese term 主体 (*shutai*) as a translation of “subject,” and presents the following thesis regarding the character of translation in Japanese sciences, especially philosophy.

The ideas and philosophies in Japanese modernity are the consequence of translation from the Western version, and the greater part of their content consists of imitation of the Western ideas. [...] However, even in such imitation sciences no perfect copy can be achieved. To the extent that such copying is attempted through “translation,” that is, through the mediation of a linguistic system other than the original, the translation itself must inevitably enter into the content of what is imitated as a semi-transparent activity. In other words, what is signified in a translation word must be inevitably affected by its signifier, which is more or less arbitrarily chosen (Kobayashi 2010: 14f.).

Kobayashi describes this activity succinctly as the “frolicking of the signifier”; and using Kobayashi's expression, this essay could be characterized as an attempt to observe the frolicking of Japanese translation words for *Bildung*.

The results of investigation into the use of the term *Bildung* are reminiscent of Naoki Sakai's (1997) examination of “translation,” where he distinguishes between a homolingual and a heterolingual worldview, and explains what “translating” and “translation” mean against this background.

Under the assumption of a homolingual worldview, communication participants belonging to the same linguistic community can ascribe uniform meanings to words (Sakai 1997: 4ff.). The homolingual worldview and the notion of translator activity become understandable if one imagines that the concept of “dog” is known in both English and Japan. In this respect, the English word “dog” can be made to coincide with the Japanese word 犬 (*inu*).

In this presentation regarding *Bildung*, two homolingual linguistic communities - German and Japanese - were presented. Within each community, the meaning of what is said and understood would remain the same. Commensurability between the two communities could be established in a similar manner, where any word in one community could somehow be translated into a word or words in the other community. Here, “translation” means a transparent activity by which each word would only be relocated, transposed, and mediated. In this respect, “translators” would be considered insignificant, and their creative contribution in translating not recognized.

However, as far as the notion of *Bildung* is concerned, a homolingual worldview does not seem to lead to any useful translation results. Following Sakai, the

heterolingual worldview seems to be appropriate for this purpose. According to this worldview, “without a guarantee of mutual understanding and transparent communication, one must speak, listen, write, and read [even] in a ‘we’-community” (Sakai 1997: 8). Accordingly, incommensurability is assumed to exist not only between one group identified as a speech community and another, but also within such a group. Here, translators “must also be regarded as interpreters” (Sakai 1997: 21), since they cannot presuppose a correspondence between what is spoken and what is understood. At the same time, however, “it is not permissible for them in translation to express what they think” (ibid.). In this respect, though they always remain in the place of a “subject in transit” (Sakai 1997: 25), it is precisely because of this that they can maintain their own exclusive place from which they can establish continuity in the discontinuity of social systems through their own practice.

This presentation has introduced the spectrum of Japanese translation possibilities for the German concept of *Bildung*. This spectrum is already conceivable even if one presupposes only a homolingual worldview. In fact, however, everyone must actually communicate heterolingually with others, and in this sense perform their communicative activity as a “translator” in the sense of a “subject in transit”. At the same time, it is assumed here that one sometimes acts as if one could communicate homolingually with others. Using the term *Bildung* as an example, an attempt was made to observe what happened and is happening in the context of such a heterolingual split. In other words, we investigated how the term *Bildung* was differently understood or misunderstood through translations, through repetitions and shifts, and through coexistences and conflicts in the educational arguments in Japan. In addition, we asked whether actual dialects were not, so to speak, created by translating the German word *Bildung* within the educational discipline, and further, whether this plurality of translation possibilities and practices of the German term led to simplifications in Japanese pedagogical semantics under the assumption of a homolingual worldview.

The era of globalization can be understood as an era of translation, insofar as it is considered important for our time to build bridges between cultures previously understood as different or even opposed. Here, the connectivity, transferability, exchangeability, clarity, manageability and measurability of concepts seem to be preferred. In this respect, it is not surprising that the term *Bildung* is nowadays more and more detached from its

philosophical origins; and it may be that the concept has diminished value in a globalized world, due to its untranslatability, incommensurability, lack of clarity, etc.

Despite this contemporary diagnosis of the term *Bildung*, or even precisely because of it, it seems to me relevant to continue consideration of the term. If an important term lacks definitional clarity, it can be detrimental to global “scientific terminology,” and *Bildung* in particular seems inappropriate in the current, fast-moving society. However, the word can provide occasions to question clear distinctions in meaning in the existing semantics, and reconstruct them in a different way. Metaphorically speaking, it seems necessary for us not only to swim more efficiently on the surface of semantics, but also to dive to its depths every now and then with the help of such a term. For this, however, one has to train at diving. But how is it possible?

The most important method for such semantic immersion is still translation itself; but translation here does not mean the transposition of one word or phrase into another in a different language. It is rather an activity of discovering, acknowledging and attempting the approach of the other, and thereby changing the self. This can be seen as a form of training in semantic immersion, and therein lies the possibility of genuine *Bildung* through translation, or perhaps better put, translation *as Bildung*.

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Note.

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