Formation Process of Body Culture as “PE Teacher Identity”: An Introduction to the PE Teacher Body Theory*

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The purpose of this paper is to clarify the formation process of body culture, i.e., gestures and behavior, of physical education teachers in Japan based on phenomenological body theory, and to present a theoretical basis for the most desirable “PE teacher identity’. It has been pointed out that PE teacher body culture has a variety of influences on students. However, how a teacher acquires body culture has never been sufficiently considered. Therefore the paper focuses on the phenomenological body theory that suggests the relationship between habits and the perceptual experience of body culture formation.

The main points of discussion are as follows:

Previous studies have shown that the image of the PE teacher as a coach has been well established, and that clarification of the process of body culture formation is warranted. In previous studies, the body culture of PE teachers has been discussed mainly in terms of ‘habitus’. However, it has not been clarified how individual PE teachers embody such a culture. Phenomenological body theory indicates that acquisition of habit involves reworking and renewal of the body schema through perception influenced by culture. Based on this, analysis of corporal punishment as a typical example of body culture in school athletic clubs can be used to clarify the model formation of PE teacher’s body culture. PE teachers’ thoughts and behavior are unconsciously formed as a “body schema” through experience of school athletic clubs where a coach’s one-sided method of instruction is almost unconditionally accepted by students striving to acquire athletic success.

In conclusion, “PE teacher identity” is formed on the basis of original body culture, and is embodied as a habit through unconscious processes. This is why PE teachers seldom notice their behavior, and thus do not change or improve it. It is only through a “body schema” and perceptual experience that a PE teacher’s thoughts and behavior, “PE teacher identity”, can be reconstructed. The possibility of PE teacher body theory can be established on the basis of this viewpoint.

Keywords: phenomenology of human body, habit, school athletic club, corporal punishment, teacher training

1. Introduction

This study examines, from the phenomenological perspective of the human body, how body culture develops into PE (Physical Education) teacher identity, indicated by particular gestures or behaviors. “PE teacher identity” in this paper refers to the images held by students, their parents, and colleagues.

It has been noted that the body culture associated with PE teacher identity has multiple effects on students. However, it has not yet been clarified how teachers acquire this body culture, which shows a gap between the existing ideal images of the PE teacher and practical ways of nurturing it. This paper assumes the phenomenological perspective that regards the acquisition of a habit as the trans-
formation of the individual body through perceptual experience as the theoretical foundation for nurturing the desirable PE teacher identity during teacher training and education.

This paper is structured as follows. First, I will review previous studies on PE teacher identity. This review will demonstrate how images of the PE teacher have been drawn and are being drawn, which in turn show the necessity of examining the development of PE teacher body culture, such as expected gestures or behaviors, and of clarifying how this culture evolves\(^1\). Second, we will review how this PE teacher body culture has been discussed from the perspective of habitus, a concept referred to in many studies and considered again here. This will show the limitations of the concept of habitus in accounting for the process of acquiring body culture in individual PE teachers who is abstracted on phenomenological grounds. Third, in order to overcome this limitation, I will adopt the phenomenological theory of the human body, specifically Merleau-Ponty’s model, and show that the acquisition of a habit transforms the human body by reworking and renewing the body schema through perceptual experience. Moreover, we show that since perception is affected by culture, a circular relationship holds between body culture and perception. Finally, on the basis of above discussions, I shall show how PE teacher body culture develops, focusing on school athletic clubs, a common experience of PE teachers. In particular, I will focus on corporal punishment as a typical example of body culture in school athletic clubs, and through an analysis of this example, I will clarify the developmental process underlying PE teacher identity. This paper also attempts to present both a common developmental structure for PE teacher body culture and a theoretical framework for discussing body culture as PE teacher identity.

2. Review of previous studies on PE teacher identity

Before I overview the evolution of the PE teacher image, I briefly mention the usefulness of considering this image. Apart from PE, teacher image is not much discussed (Kinoshita, 1984: p.53), which makes the image of the PE teacher unique. According to Maeda and Mori (1975: p.15), by questioning changes in PE education in different ways, PE teachers play a critical role in dictating their educa-

2.1. Past and present images of the PE teacher

In order to overview the evolution of the PE teacher image, it would be helpful to consider this image both before and after the introduction of sports into the Japanese education system. I will then consider the present studies of these images.

In Japan, the image of the PE teacher as a “military person,” according to Kinoshita (1984: p.53), was established when “military drills” were adopted into physical education in 1886. Jin (1984) noted that the motivating principle of the education ministry in establishing this military image was to cultivate the military personality and habits through both military drills and the residential system in teacher’s schools (Jin, 1984: p.127). At the same time, this image became well established because retired military persons under 35 served as PE teachers (Inoue, 1959: p.257).

Gradually, however, criticism of this image increased, and a demand for a more intellectual image was promoted (Kinoshita, 1984: p.54). This demand, however, was not for fundamental change but a desire to add an intellectual character to the military image (Kinoshita, 1984: p.55). This suggests, according to Uchiyama (1975: p.24), that the military image of the PE teacher became a stereotype that survives even today. Abe (2011: p.41; p.43) describes this as a negative legacy, and notes that PE teachers should recognize the effects of this adverse legacy even now.

One positive factor changed this military image: the introduction of sports into Japanese school education in Meiji era and its spread across the country in Taisho era. This required PE teachers to become competent in ball game skills, which meant shifting the PE teacher image from that of a military person to that of a sports coach (Kinoshita 1984: p.55). Moreover, the adoption of sports into the Japanese school curriculum not only changed the contents of PE class but also entailed a very different way of teaching and learning than the previous style, which involved en masse activities directed by the teacher’s orders (Kinoshita, 1984: p.55). This suggests that the image of PE teacher is closely linked to changes in
both class content and instructional methods, and consequently to PE teachers’ behavior.

Since sport activities, even today, are the primary educational components of Japanese PE class, the sports coach image is still common. Nakai et al. (1996) noted that previous studies did not examine the PE teacher image from the perspective of students and focused instead on the context of the class, then conducted questionnaire surveys to ask university students about these points. They concluded that students generally have an image of the PE teacher as a person who is healthy, mentally tough, and intimidating, and this image is affected by the personality or appearance of the individual PE teacher (Nakai et al., 1996: p.130). A reason for the intimidating image of PE teachers is the connection between corporal punishment and PE teachers. Indeed, according to a past survey by the Japanese Ministry of Education (1986), the rate of corporal punishment by PE teachers is conspicuously higher than that of other subjects’ teachers*2. This relationship between corporal punishment and PE teachers has been discussed in previous research (Morikawa, 1989).

2.2. The influence of body culture as PE teacher identity and its significance

As seen above, it is believed that these previous images of the PE teacher were formed in part by the teachers’ daily words and actions. In this paper, these behaviors are understood as the body culture of the PE teacher. This does not mean that I dismiss the influence of the historical/social background on the development of these images, which have been discussed in earlier studies. Nevertheless, as I will show below, how individual teachers acquire the PE teacher identity can only be clarified by reconsidering the body culture of PE teachers from a phenomenological perspective. This also enables us to consider the possibility of the transformation of PE teacher identity. On reflection, this is why, for previous studies focusing on the historical/social aspects of this issue, it has been difficult to mention or suggest such concrete transformation*3.

Gestures or behaviors are typical examples of body culture. As Takizawa (2002: pp.20-21) noted, gesture is a culture and its acquisition occurs unintentionally. Tada (1972: p.229) also described the role of gesture in human relationships: Gesture, behavior, and posture are the mental-physical expressions for attunement with others. Thus, they could affect our relationships with others, including the relationship between a teacher and students. For example, teachers’ gestures and behaviors have been found to affect students’ emotion and learning (Ookawara, 1987). According to Ookawara (1987: p.51), it is necessary to pay attention to nonverbal communication, since teacher’s gestures and behaviors could influence students more than their verbal instructions. This importance of nonverbal communication is also suggested in sports research (Shimazaki and Kikkawa, 2012; Yokoyama et al., 1992).

On this relation between PE teacher body culture and nonverbal communication, Siedentop (1983: p.111) noted that “you should be thoroughly aware of the hidden messages emanating from everything you do.” As this remark shows, it is important for PE teachers to focus on nonverbal communication. This also reinforces the necessity of examining PE teacher body culture because we can understand nonverbal communication to be a synonym for bodily communication (Sakai and Yoshikawa, 1984: p.19).

We have now seen that PE teachers unintentionally affect students by not only the contents of their teaching but also their body culture, such as gestures or behaviors, and therefore, in order to consider these effects, it is necessary to understand PE teacher body culture. Next, I outline how this has been previously discussed in order to identify the limitations of this work.

3. Reconsidering the arguments of PE teacher body culture

3.1. PE teacher body culture as habitus

Conventionally, this issue has been discussed from the perspective of the habitus in sociology. For instance, Sawada (2001) examined, from a historical and sociological perspective, how the habitus of the PE teacher evolved in modern society. He suggested that the bodily habitus of the PE teacher is created by expectations of a role controlling students, which are cultivated in the teacher training system and in schools themselves (Sawada, 2001: p.206; p.214). In other words, a general understanding of the PE teacher’s role is that the PE teacher should teach
bodily discipline to students (Sawada, 2001: pp.214-215). According to Sawada (2001: p.215) this indicates that PE teacher him/herself adopts this bodily habitus, showing that we implicitly connect PE teacher identity with this kind of ability.

Sawada (2001: pp.204-205) describes PE teacher identity as formed on the basis of a particular way of thinking and behavior, particularly individual competence in specific sports and a professional attitude about teaching class and teaching in school athletic clubs determined by the era, region, and culture of the teacher and student. This PE teacher identity, according to Sawada (2001: pp.204-205), is built and handed down by a conventional normative system (habitus) among PE teachers, and PE teachers inevitably adopt it as PE teacher culture. Thus, PE teacher identity is formed and transmitted as a habitus particular to PE teachers.

Takizawa (2002) contends that the body culture transmitted to us through our daily lives should be adopted as new educational material in the PE curriculum. To consider this body culture, as Takizawa (2002: p.20) remarks, is equivalent to paying attention to the habitus in sociology, which would enable us to recognize the body culture unintentionally acquired in daily life. He also insists that in order to conduct training in this body culture, the teacher him/herself needs to keep transforming his/her body because his/her gestures continue to implicitly affect students (Takizawa, 2002: p.24).

In sports sociology, Shimizu (1993: p.9) discusses that there is a significance of arguing human body, and suggests that the PE teacher habitus should thus be considered a concrete topic for research. He also notes that the military image of the PE teacher had been formed historically, and the embodiment of the PE teacher affects a student’s body (Shimizu, 1993: p.9). He also suggests that in order to consider this topic, it is necessary to focus on the individual body, which is an expression of the social system.

The habitus of PE teacher has also been discussed in the context of school athletic clubs. Matsuo (2001), for example, examines the formation of the habitus in sports training facilities by employing Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus. Kai (2000), also assuming Bourdieu’s definitions, discusses the relationship between credential-granting societies and school athletic clubs. Moreover, in a discussion of the bodily habitus in school athletic clubs, Sakamoto (2011) insists that the PE teacher body is strongly shaped by school athletic clubs. As these examples show, numerous studies have been conducted on PE teacher body culture from the perspective of habitus. Why is this the case? Considering the reason in the next section, I will also show the pros and cons of this approach.

3.2. Problems with the habitus perspective: Necessity of phenomenological perspective

Matsuo (2001: p.572) showed the following advantages of employing the concept of the habitus: First, it enables us to avoid structural determinism and to analyze a dynamic relationship between an individual and structure. Second, it also enables us to recognize a tacit pattern of law or disposition that athletes themselves may be unaware of. In addition, Matsuo noted the significance of the embodied habitus in referring to Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital (Matsuo, 2001: p.572). In order to avoid possible problems in the discussion of habitus related to PE teacher body culture, I shall limit my consideration here to the points presented by Matsuo.

Let me consider, first, the relationship between the structure and the individual in the habitus. Bourdieu (1980/1990: p.60) posited two different levels of the habitus: the “class habitus” and the “individual habitus.” The individual habitus is a “variant” of and a “deviation” from the class habitus (Bourdieu, 1980/1990: p.60). This model shows, according to Sakamoto (2011: p.67), how influential (binding) a habitus can be on individuals. It is also necessary to show how the individual habitus influences the class habitus in order to understand the dynamic relationship between the structure and the individual. This, as Ishii (1993) argued, is analogous to the relationship between Saussure’s concepts of langue and parole*. In fact, this means that the individual habitus plays the role of not only being shaped by but also shaping, the habitus of class*. Thus, we can find that first advantage suggested by Matsuo: Examining the habitus allows examination of the dynamic relation between the structure and the individual.

In this relationship, however, how is the individual affected by a society or a culture? In other words, how does one come to acquire a habitus? This question is directly connected to the second advantage of invoking the habitus, as noted above: It allows recognition of a tacit pattern of law or dispo-
sition that athletes themselves may be unaware of (Matsuo, 2001: p.572).

On this issue, Bourdieu (1980/1990: p.59) argued that “the habitus is precisely this immanent law, lex insita, inscribed in bodies by identical history.” This is also expressed as a body of knowledge embedded in the human body (Nakayama, 2007: p.148). Moreover, Shimizu (1993: p.8) defines the habitus as a historical product generated in the past and memorized by the human body. These remarks show that the human body itself plays an essential role in the acquisition of a habitus, which is why many previous studies have focused on the concept of habitus in considering PE teacher body culture. According to Bourdieu (1980/1990: p.73), the habitus is “what is ‘learned by the body’” and it “is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one is.” In addition, the habitus is also perceived as “inherited knowledge can only survive in the incorporated state.”

Accordingly, discussions of habitus have claimed how our body cultures have been transmitted through generations, as has the relationship between the class and individual; it has also been shown that the individual acquires the habitus in one's body. Thus, previous studies on PE teacher identity have discussed PE teacher body culture from the perspective of habitus. These arguments show that PE teacher body culture is an unconscious habit that has been transmitted through a group of PE teachers, but they do not show how individual PE teachers acquire and embody the body culture. In other words, from the perspective of the habitus, the phenomenon of embodying a culture has not been sufficiently clarified.

Crossley (2001a, 2001b, 1996/2003) criticized this problem of the habitus as developed by Bourdieu: Even though “the conception of habitus is based on the premise that the human body can produce stable characteristics in relation to perceptive, linguistic, cognitive, kinetic, and other kinds of action,” Bourdieu does not address this point (Crossley, 1996/2003: p.314). As Crossley (1996/2003: p.315) noted, “although culture could be ‘a second nature’ for humans by habitus, this only comes from what our first nature give us: the characteristic which produces our habit.” Thus, the human body itself plays a role in the foundation of this “second nature.” It is not enough, in the arguments employing the concept of habitus, to merely acknowledge that the human body itself plays an essential role in the acquisition of the PE teacher identity. Therefore, this paper considers this human body and elucidates how PE teacher identity comes to be embodied.

As Crossley’s critique shows, the problem of the habitus, in the arguments about PE teacher body culture has become clear. In fact, previous studies employing the concept of the habitus have not sufficiently clarified how habits are acquired in the individual body and the possibility of transforming such habits. Therefore, it is appropriate to proceed further to consider the following two points: Firstly, how should we understand the human body, which plays such an important role in embodying the habitus as the habits of individual PE teachers? Here, the body cannot be understood from a sociological perspective such that of Bourdieu. I shall examine the body as it is understood in phenomenology, since there are thorough arguments for a relationship between habits and the human body not found in the sociological perspective. Next, the process by which the human body acquires a habit will be considered by focusing on the concept of body schema.

4. The acquisition of habit in the phenomenological theory of the human body

While discussing the problem of the previous research employing the concept of habitus, the concept of habit in phenomenology will be considered, and the process by which the habitus is acquired will also be clarified. We shall mainly assume Merleau-Ponty’s work, *Phenomenology of Perception*, as the theoretical background. Merleau-Ponty is a representative figure in the phenomenology of the human body, and his theory of human body contains detailed descriptions of the bodily acquisition of habits. For instance, he posits the concepts of “body schema” or the “habitual body,” which could be essential in considering the relationship between habits and the human body. Moreover, from his theory of human body, we can also consider the second problem of habitus that Crossley noted, i.e., the human body as “first nature.” Using these theories, we thus create a theoretical framework to elucidate the developmental process for body culture as PE teacher identity.
4.1. Habit and the human body

Merleau-Ponty, in *Phenomenology of Perception*, treats examples of acquisition of habit in different ways. For example, he writes that “the acquisition of the habit is surely the grasping of a signification, but it is specifically the motor grasping of a motor signification” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.144). “Motor” here is used as an antonym of “ideal” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.140). He described the contrast between them with an example from dance: “In learning the habit of a certain dance,” we do not “find the formula of the movement through analysis and then recompose it, taking this ideal sketch as a guide and drawing upon already acquired movements (such as walking and running)” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: pp.143-144). He further argued that we do not compose a habit through ideals, but rather, through acquisition. “The body, as has often been said, ‘captures’ (kapiert) and ‘understands’ the movement” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.144)*10. Merleau-Ponty’s example of “psychic blindness” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.105) demonstrates this relationship.

A sufferer of psychic blindness cannot perform “abstract movements,” thus, cannot perform “movements that are not directed at any actual situation, such as moving his arms or legs upon command, or extending and reflexing a finger” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.105). On the other hand, such an individual can scratch her nose immediately when he/she senses itching. In other words, he/she can execute “concrete movements” without any difficulty (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.105). Merleau-Ponty notes the following:

“The patient is conscious of bodily space as the envelope of his habitual action, but not as an objective milieu. His body is available as a means of insertion into his familiar surroundings, but not as a means of expression of a spontaneous and free spatial thought (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.106).

According to Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.113), for the patient of psychic blindness, “even if the instructions have for him an intellectual signification, they do not have a motor signification, they do not speak to him as a motor subject.” As we can see here, for the patient, the envelope of his habitual action and the objective milieu have different motor significations, and this difference suggests double layers of the human body corresponding to this difference.

Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.78; p.84) used the phenomenon of the phantom limb (leg/arm) to show the double layers constituted by the habitual body and the actual body. Phantom limb syndrome is the phenomenon in which one feels pain in a limb that has been amputated. Kida (1984: p.126) notes that this phenomenon reflects the layer of the non-personal habitual body, normally suppressed by the layer of personal actual body, surfacing and temporarily haunting the actual body. We can understand the example of psychic blindness in terms of this layered body structure as the actual body being damaged or lost, leaving only the habitual body functioning to execute habitual concrete movements. As can be seen, Merleau-Ponty’s framework vividly describes the workings of human body, of which we are not usually consciously aware*11.

From above arguments, Merleau-Ponty concluded that the habitual body, which operates in concrete movements, is privileged over the actual body (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.106). In other words, in Merleau-Ponty’s theory of human body, the habitual body plays an essential role in the acquisition of a habit, and this privilege also means that the habitual body is “a first nature,” as previously noted.*12 Therefore, it is necessary to focus on this habitual body in order to elucidate the process by which PE teacher body culture is developed.

4.2. Body schema and acquisition of habit

Merleau-Ponty presented “body schema” as the typical working of the habitual body*13 and described “acquiring a habit as the reworking and renewal of the body schema” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.143). This suggests that acquiring a habit entails both reworking one’s own body schema, and thus a body culture. Merleau-Ponty presents some concrete examples of body schema, the following is an example about using a typewriter (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012, pp.144-145).

In order to master typing, he argued we do not need to know “how to indicate where on the keyboard the letters that compose the words are located” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.145). In other words, “Knowing how to type, then, is not the same as knowing the location of each letter on the keyboard” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.145). In other words, mastering typing means “to take up
residence in them” and acquiring “a knowledge in our hands, which is only given through a bodily effort” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.145). In addition, “the subject knows where the letters are on the keyboard just as we know where one of our limbs is—a knowledge of familiarity that does not provide us with a position in objective space” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.145).

What the typing example shows are features common to the acquisition of habit in general, and this example shows the relation between the habitual body and concrete movements as the working of body schema. Because of this working of body schema, we feel an affinity with familiar houses or favorite tools, and we can also walk freely in a familiar house or manipulate familiar tools without being particularly aware of them. As displayed in the typing example, a habit is knowledge acquired through a bodily effort (bodily movement), and “every habit is simultaneously motor and perceptual” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.153). Merleau-Ponty gave an example of a blind man’s cane (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.144) to clarify this point, noting that “the exploration of objects with a cane, which we gave above as an example of a motor habit, is just as much an example of a perceptual habit” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.153). This example shows the concrete necessity of reworking body schema. Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.154) noted that “the pressure on the hand and the cane are no longer given, the cane is no longer an object that the blind man would perceive, it has become an instrument with which he perceives. It is an appendage of the body, or an extension of the bodily synthesis.” For this reason, he noted that “habit resides neither in thought nor in the objective body, but rather in the body as the mediator of a world” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.146), and of course, this body is the habitual body. Because the acquisition of a habit is the reworking of body schema triggered by perception, Merleau-Ponty stated that “the analysis of motor habit as an extension of existence continues, then, into an analysis of perceptual habit as an acquisition of a world” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.154).

In order to consider how perceptual experience causes the reworking of body schema, we can take the example of typical color perception. According to Merleau-Ponty, “when the child becomes habituated to distinguishing between blue and red,” he/she does not recognize the general sense of color “through the pair blue-red” (1945/2012: p.154) but through the realization that “this particular manner of vibrating and of attracting the gaze that we call ‘blue’ and ‘red’ must be manifested from the outset upon the ‘blue’ and ‘red’ panels the child is shown” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.154). In other words, “with the gaze, we have available a natural instrument comparable to the blind man’s cane” and “here again the grasping of a signification is accomplished by the body” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.154). Therefore, “learning to see colors is the acquisition of a certain style of vision, a new use of one’s own body; it is to enrich and to reorganize the body schema” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: pp.154-155).

As we have seen, the acquisition of a habit can be seen as the reworking and renewal of body schema, a transformation guided by perceptual experience. For this reason, Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.147) noted that “the body is our general means of having a world.” This means that the body schema is “a system open onto the world, and correlative with it,” and by understanding it, we can understand that the acquisition of habit represents the transformation of the body schema (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.526).

In addition, the acquisition of habit via the transformation of body schema, triggered by perceptual experience, simultaneously suggests that the transformed body schema serves as a new framework for perception. This is seen in the case of color perception. In other words, the acquisition of habit and body culture occurs through perception triggering the reworking of body schema; furthermore, perception itself is changed by the newly acquired body culture. Nagataki (1999) calls this circular relationship the “knowledge-culture-ladenness of perception.” In referring to Hanson’s remark “seeing is a ‘theory-laden’ undertaking” (Hanson, 1958: p.19), Nagataki expands this understanding of the act of perception: as a knowledge-laden event (Nagataki, 1999: p.67). According to Nagataki (1999: p.68), this knowledge includes not only the objectified thing defined by language but also the tactile knowledge from the act of perceiving itself at bodily level. In short, perception is affected and directed by the acquired knowledge and culture.

Hence, by understanding perception, we can understand both the acquisition and the transforma-
tion of body culture and the human body. Merleau-Ponty’s descriptions of the human body and habit could be an effective theoretical framework for clarifying the development of PE teacher identity. It is thus necessary to pay attention to body schema and perception in the consideration of PE teacher body culture.

5. The developmental process of body culture as the identity of the PE teacher

5.1. PE teachers and school athletic clubs in Japan

This section considers the developmental process of body culture as PE teacher identity from a phenomenological perspective. For this purpose, I would like to examine the evolution of the sports coach image of the PE teacher, since this continues to be a common image. Through this image, we will highlight the relationship between PE teachers and school athletic clubs.

Hence, it is necessary to examine the question of how PE teachers come to acquire the gestures and behaviors of sports coaches. We found that PE teachers acquire these features through their experience in school athletic clubs. Japanese school athletic clubs are quite different from those of other countries; they form an important part of the school curriculum, particularly PE. Although the role of school athletic clubs has changed in the Japanese educational system, even today it has continued to be an extension of PE class in the Japanese educational system. This relationship is symbolized by the teachers who manage the clubs’ activities. In Japanese school athletic clubs, teachers basically manage the clubs while students play sports of their own choice in each club. Thus, a unique relationship exists between teachers and school athletic clubs in Japan, and the clubs serve as a special environment for teachers.

The development of the sports coach image of the PE teacher through these clubs is paradoxically shown by the following facts: PE teacher identity is not necessarily formed through PE class; teachers of other subjects also acquire the PE teacher identity. We can see that PE teacher identity is linked to the PE teacher image as a sports coach by their association with school athletic clubs as each group would have a common preferred sport. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on school athletic clubs to understand the development of body culture as PE teacher identity.

In school athletic clubs, students actually acquire a range of knowledge and skills. For example, a student new to a club will learn the group’s particular rules, including tacit rules of behavior, such as the manner of communicating with teachers (coaches), senior students, and new students. In order to navigate these rules or routines with confidence, students need to acquire these rules and routines as habits. New students need to be able to play their expected roles automatically, without time-consuming thinking, which means cultivating a habit, and thus acquiring a new body culture.

5.2. The acquisition of the PE teacher identity by the human body: A case analysis of corporal punishment as a habit

The phenomenon of corporal punishment in school athletic clubs exemplifies the features of body culture in school athletic clubs. Corporal punishment is common among both PE teachers and school athletic clubs (Ministry of Education, 1986), and its practice has been transmitted as a body culture. Although corporal punishment is legally banned, it continues to be practiced even now. Sakamoto (2011: p.69) argued that the persistence of corporal punishment is rooted in a problem of embodiment, and that corporal punishment in school athletic clubs has been transmitted as a body culture at bodily level of human being. Furthermore, Sakamoto argued that this culture becomes a habitus in school athletic clubs, and therefore typically unacceptable behaviors become accepted in school athletic clubs to the extent that they are transmitted at a bodily level. As we have seen, however, an understanding of the transmission of corporal punishment as a body culture needs to be recaptured from a phenomenological perspective, through the theory of human body in particular. Hence, let me reconsider corporal punishment and the development of body culture as PE teacher identity using Merleau-Ponty’s theory.

We can take an example of a new student in a school athletic club and consider his acquisition of corporal punishment as a body culture. First, the student witnesses corporal punishment firsthand, when a senior student is punished by the teacher (coach). In other words, he/she perceptually ex-
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experiences corporal punishment in the school athletic club for the first time. This is quite significant at bodily level because, as Merleau-Ponty noted from color perception, the student’s witnessing corporal punishment indicates he/she has incorporated corporal punishment in her body schema. Along with color perception, this also means that the body captures and understands the significance of corporal punishment. Moreover, the student can capture and understand this significance only through the school athletic club. As Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.71) remarked, “to see an object is to come to inhabit it,” and this experience is quite different from watching or listening to an event through a screen. The corporal punishment witnessed in the school athletic club could only cause the transformation of the student’s body schema, which can be considered “a system open onto the world, and correlative with it” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.526).

Next, the student him/herself receives corporal punishment from the teacher (coach). This forms another experience of perceiving corporal punishment and is a more direct experience, different from when other students receive the punishment. The student him/herself also becomes aware of when or under what circumstances students receive corporal punishment by witnessing corporal punishment given to other students. At the point when the student receives corporal punishment directly, the reworking and renewal of his/her body schema further evolves, and corporal punishment is definitively internalized in her body.

However, this cannot completely explain how students who receive corporal punishment acquire it as a body culture because some students do not accept corporal punishment. The reason students accept corporal punishment can be determined by focusing on the “knowledge-culture-ladenness of perception.” The experience of seeing or receiving corporal punishment could be acquired as a habit and a body culture under the following conditions. The charisma of the teacher (coach) is one of these conditions. For example, through interviews with a coach and former students of a prominent high school baseball club, Nakamura (2007) found a confidential relationship between the coach and students that could not be understood by outsiders. In an interview, the coach said that he/she administered corporal punishment to control students by power and to be a charisma (Nakamura, 2007: pp.76-77).

Furthermore, according his former students, all students on the team were strongly affected by the coach’s charisma and believed everything he said (Nakamura, 2007: pp.120-121).

Underlying a coach’s charisma, of course, is the conviction that students can succeed and win in sports competitions by obeying the coach’s instructions, including submitting to corporal punishment. Often, this conviction is supported by past successes in sports competition. In other words, once a student acquires success, subsequent corporal punishment seen or received by students is considered necessary for success in sports competition. As Nagataki (1999: p.68) noted, the knowledge of success is acquired at a bodily level and as tacit knowledge cultivated by perception. This is reflected in former students’ comments that even when explained, no one outside the team can understand the unique relationship between the coach and students (Nakamura, 2007: p.120)*16. Accordingly, what the student acquires under the influence of the coach’s charisma is indescribable and includes the body culture of the school athletic club.

Thus, through the “knowledge-culture-ladenness of perception,” corporal punishment becomes a positive phenomenon for the student, and at this stage, corporal punishment is already understood by him/her as a part of coaching. “The body, then, has understood and the habit has been acquired when the body allows itself to be penetrated by a new signification, when it has assimilated a new meaningful core” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.148). Here, corporal punishment is acquired as a habit.

In addition, students’ use of corporal punishment on other students both dictates his/her acquisition of corporal punishment as body culture and reinforces this acquisition because it is a motor and perceptual habit, and is also acquired through bodily effort to the extent that corporal punishment is a habit. This corporal punishment in school athletic clubs is transmitted from the student to his/her junior students or after that student becomes a teacher from the teacher to her students. The student (who has become a teacher) has reworked her body schema to accept corporal punishment as an acceptable behavior in school athletic clubs. Moreover, “a movement is learned when the body has understood it, i.e., when it has incorporated it into its ‘world’” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012: p.140), and therefore corporal punishment becomes
a habitual movement that enables the student (who has become a teacher) to create a relationship with his/her (junior) students. Hence, the student (who has become a teacher) holds and uses corporal punishment as a response to others in the school athletic club as a particular world.

Of course, corporal punishment is an extreme example, and PE teacher identity has many positive aspects. Thus, students acquire numerous habits in school athletic clubs, and these habits form the body culture of the PE teacher. In particular, the hierarchical relationship with teachers (coaches) or senior students could powerfully affect the development of gestures or behaviors in a PE teacher. The developmental process for corporal punishment as a body culture could share a common structure with other body cultures in PE teacher identity. This shows that future PE teachers embody common habits and acquire PE teacher identity by playing sports, living together, and spending extensive time with associates in the school athletic club.

6. Conclusion: The possibility of PE teacher body theory

PE teacher identity is constituted by the distinctive body culture of the PE teacher and is manifested through a variety of bodily motions. The PE teacher him/herself is not necessarily aware of this body culture, which can affect students unintentionally. This fact is important to recognize. In particular, the negative images associated with PE teacher need to be transformed, and body culture could be an essential perspective for this transformation. While important work has been done on PE teacher body culture from the perspective of habitus, reflecting on the relation between the individual PE teacher and PE teacher identity has shown that we should pay attention to how the individual PE teacher embodies body culture as habit and bear in mind the limits of analyses based on the concept of habitus. In this paper, analysis from a phenomenological perspective has shown that the acquisition of habit can be defined as the reworking of body schema through perceptual experience. Accordingly, the development of body culture as PE teacher identity is clarified by focusing on the PE teacher’s body, in particular the reworking of the teacher’s body schema through a variety of experiences in school athletic clubs. As the case of corporal punishment shows, PE teachers implicitly acquire various body cultures that become embodied as habits Therefore, it is difficult for them to become aware of their habits and transform them.

However, an insight from this discussion is the possibility of the transformation of PE teacher body culture, which could include the transformation of negative aspects of this culture, such as corporal punishment. For this possibility, it is significant that we understand the acquisition of habit as the reworking and renewal of body schema. As Merleau-Ponty observed, we are always reworking and renewing our own body schema, and therefore it is also possible for PE teachers to do so. In other words, only by focusing on the body schema and the perceptual experience transforming them can we aim at transforming body culture as PE teacher identity. It is thus important to examine the subconsciously acquired aspects of PE teacher identity, in order to identify and preserve aspects that should be improved, and develop an organized way to transmit them to foster a positive body culture as PE teacher identity. Such training in body culture could ameliorate the problems that occur in school athletic clubs.

We have seen now that PE teacher body culture has a great impact on students’ learning. Hence it is necessary for teacher training and education to develop training on PE teacher identity, which until now has been implicitly cultivated by the culture of school athletic clubs. Therefore, the construction of concrete programs or curricula focusing on body culture and PE teacher identity should be one of the future tasks. In addition, the specific problem of corporal punishment, a typical example of PE teacher body culture and identity, should be examined further in detail.

Notes

*1: In this paper, “development” and “acquisition” have the same meaning. The former is used in reference to body culture or habit, and the latter is used while referring to the PE teacher.
*2: In 1986, the Ministry of Education (1986) showed the percentages of teachers using corporal punishment. PE teachers had the highest rate at 42.6%, and Japanese language teachers ranked second at 14.2%.
*3: For example, while Abe (2011: p.47) noted that individual PE teachers finalizes PE itself, in order to escape from the negative legacy of PE teacher identity, it is essential to exert a minute but a good-faith effort.
*4: *Langue* and *parole* are key concepts in Saussure’s theory of
language. The former refers to individual languages such as English or French and the latter refers to actual speech in these languages as delivered by individuals. Maruyama (1981) discusses this point in detail.

*5: Like the case in which the repeated violation and invasion of individual *parole* to *langue* eventually changes the structure of the *langue* itself, the individual habitus continually encourages the class habitus to allow itself to evolve (Ishii, 1993: p.148). Though he also notes that *langue* and habitus each have different basic features (Ishii 1993: p.147), the present study does not address this point because this study only employs the analogy of *langue* in order to capture the relationship by which the individual habitus could transform the class habitus.

*6: According to Nakayama (2007: p.148), “lex” means law or rule.

*7: Crossley, moreover, noted that Bourdieu “tends to portray the relationship of habit to action in a very one-directional manner” (2001b: p.136), since he “has had more to say about ‘reproduction’ than about ‘transformation’” (2001b: p.112).

*8: On this point, Crossley (2001b: p.118) maintains that “phenomenology, and particularly the phenomenological analysis of habit, can fill in some of the important gaps in his (Bourdieu’s) work.”

*9: In Japan, Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy, especially his theory of human body, has been primarily referenced in the field of human movement theory, such as by Kaneko (2009).

*10: Henry (1965/1975) also noted the same phenomenon Merleau-Ponty describes. According to Henry, there is “a knowledge of the same type as manual prehension or motor touch, i.e., a knowledge which is not an intellectual or theoretical knowledge, which is not a representation,” which “is a bodily knowledge.” (1975: p.94)

*11: See Sawada (2012) for more detail on Merleau-Ponty’s thoughts on the pathological phenomenon and its phenomenological significance.

*12: On the body as “first nature,” moreover, Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012: p.93) argued that “my own body is the primordial habit, the one that conditions all others and by which they can be understood.”

*13: Yuasa (1990: p.226) also noted that “Merleau-Ponty thinks that body schema functions at the level of habitual body which underlies actual body.”

*14: According to Yamamoto (2008: p.233), in Japan, “school athletic clubs started as extra-curricular activities having no institutional position in the school system, but they also play an important role, along with PE class, in education,” so “in other words, we could regard the school athletic club as a kind of extension of PE class in the school system.”

*15: Nakamura (1995: p.123) indicates that some problems of school athletic clubs, such as corporal punishment, have not been growing as rapidly in recent years but have existed since the beginning of school athletic clubs a century ago.

*16: Another student said the following: “The coach said ‘if I say white when we see black crow,’ you must believe that it is white. All of students truly thought of the crow as white. We were taught and trained to absolutely believe what he says, good or bad. When I say like this, one generally says ‘you are so pitiful because you act like a puppet,’ but this is absolutely wrong. All of us did so with believing ‘every-

thing of this coach!’ Especially at that time, we were believers in his good sense.” (Nakamura, 2007: p.116)

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Main Works:
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