

NISE Newsletter

for Special Education in Asia and the Pacific

No.19

October, 2002

Greetings

Interaction with researchers, educators, and administrators in charge of special education in the member states of APEID (Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development) is an extremely important part of the international exchange activities of this Institute.

Some of this interaction has come via the APEID Newsletter for Special Education in Asia and the Pacific. Using the gathering of the APEID Regional Seminar on Special Education as a springboard, the first edition of the Newsletter was issued in June 1989 with the objective of creating a network for continuous information exchange among the participants in the Seminar.

In the 13 years that have passed since, the Newsletter has been issued regularly in line with the holding of APEID Special Education Seminars. And in this way it has had a major impact on international exchange activities among research institutes.

The 6th programming (1997-2001) of the APEID Special Education Seminar came to an end in 2001, and from 2002 (FY2002) the seminar will be held as the "International Seminar on Special Education in Asia and the Pacific".

In line with this change, we at the National Institute of Special Education (NISE) have decided to publish the "Newsletter for Special Education in Asia and the Pacific". By using the Internet and other means, this newsletter will serve as a way of actively releasing information on the current status of NISE research and international exchange to not only APEID members, but also to the many UNESCO member countries in the region. This will be an addition to our efforts to create a network for continuous information exchange between participants in the International Seminar on Special Education in Asia and the Pacific.

With the appearance of this new newsletter, we hope to serve a useful role in supporting children with special education needs in Asia, the Pacific, and throughout the world.

The countries and sub-regions of the Asia and Pacific region are taking a variety of unique approaches toward providing education that meets local conditions as well as children's individual educational needs. We hope that the readers of our newsletter will help us share these creative endeavors with the rest of the world.

HOSOMURA Michio

President, NISE

The 22nd Asian and Pacific International Seminar on Special Education

1. PURPOSE

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific Region have experienced rapid economic growth. Along with these social changes, education for children with special educational needs has been improving in each country. Under such situation, importance of providing educational support based on partnership and collaboration among the persons and organizations concerned is pointed out.

The National Institute of Special Education, Japan (NISE), as one of APEID (Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development) cooperation centers, have conducted annual APEID seminars since 1981. This year, we changed the name and contents of the seminar. The new name is "Asian and Pacific International Seminar on Special Education." This seminar focuses on specific theme and is aimed to contribute to the development of special education among the member countries.

The 22nd Asian and Pacific International Seminar on Special Education will be held by NISE and the Japanese Commission for UNESCO at Yokohama, Japan in November, 2002.

2. THEME OF THE SEMINAR

In order to provide better education for children with special educational needs, it is important to build partnerships among the related persons and institutions, to network in communities and to enhance teacher training. From this point of view, discussing the practices of special education in each country is thought to be important for its development in the future.

The theme of this year's seminar is "The Current

Situations and Future Trends of Educational Practice for Children with Visual and/or Hearing Impairments - -- Practice and its outcome of Educational Support in Each Country---. "

In the seminar, we will discuss how each country tackles the following subjects.

1. Providing effective teaching materials and methods for children with visual impairments
2. Providing effective teaching materials and methods for children with hearing impairments
3. Development and practice of teaching materials for children with visual impairment
4. Development and practice of teaching materials for children with hearing impairments
5. Education for children with visual impairments in regular schools
6. Education for children with hearing impairments in regular schools

3. ORGANIZER

The National Institute of Special Education, Japan (NISE)

The Japanese National Commission for UNESCO (JNCU)

4. SCHEDULE AND VENUE

Date : November 11 - 16, 2002

Venue : Yokohama Symposia

11th (Mon.) Arrival at Narita Airport

12th (Tue.) Registration and Orientation / Opening Ceremony / Presentation / Party

13th (Wed.) Presentation, Discussion

14th (Thu.) Symposium and Study Visit

15th (Fri.) Study Visit :

The National Institute of Special

Education

The National Kurihama School for
Children with Disabilities

16th (Sat.) Leaving from Narita

5. PARTICIPANTS

1) Overseas participants

Participants nominated by each government of the following 13 countries will be invited ; Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand. They should be experts of the aforementioned subjects and be able to make a presentation of them in English.

2) Japanese Participants

Staff members from NISE and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, teachers of special schools, school supervisors and researchers of other educational institutes.

6. LANGUAGE

Official language is English and Japanese. Overseas participants are expected to have a good command of English.

CHIDA Koki

*Chief, Executive Committee of the Asian and Pacific
International Seminar on Special Education, NISE*

BOOKS

Toward Inclusive Education in Developing Countries : The Three-Phase Programme of Special Education - A Unique Contribution from Sri Lanka (2002)

K. Piyasena

Published by Sena Publishers, Sri Lanka

ISBN 955-96865-1-8

This book elaborates the three-phase special education programme experimented in the ordinary school system in Sri Lanka. The phase-one is Education of children with disabilities and other handicapping conditions in the community who are excluded from education. The phase-two is education of children who have special educational needs in schools. The phase-three is education of the intellectually gifted.

Through the three-phase system a successful attempt has been made to address all the special educational needs in the country. This programme later gained international recognition.

The author of this book is a Special Education Adviser of the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, and a participant of the 4th APEID Seminar, 1984.

Overview of Head Departments in the 22nd Seminar

Department of Education for Children with Visual Impairments

Visual impairment causes various difficulties in many daily situations, such as in understanding surroundings, achieving orientation and mobility, and reading printed characters.

Our department consists of one section for education of the Blind and another for education of the Low Vision.

Both sections do practical research on effective courses of study and teaching methods for supporting children in their studies and daily lives. Topics taken up include, for instance, effective methods of teaching Braille and optimum use of low vision aids in various teaching situations. In addition we offer educational consultation with regard to the rearing and education of children with visual impairment and the training of special education teachers.

1. Section of Education for the Blind

Blind children need to learn how to use both their tactile and auditory capabilities to compensate effectively for lack of vision.

In this Section we are focusing particularly on research into the materials for effective use of personal computers in the teaching of children with blindness. The purpose of this study is to develop a learning system that allows each child to learn under conditions optimized to his or her individual tactile and auditory abilities. This system is progressively providing children with blindness with a better learning environment.

2. Ongoing advanced research projects include :

- 1) Development of a personal computer-based teaching system that enables use of tactile graphics and sound matched to the tactile and auditory

perceptivity of the individual child. We are also compiling a guideline and a prototype of the teaching materials for this system.

- 2) Development of the "tactile picture-book" for nurturing tactile sense in blind infants.

Completed studies on practical exploitation of tactile sense include :

- Study on readiness for tactual reading of graphic information.
- Study on effective methods of creating graphic tactile materials.
- Development of test for evaluating tactile learning capability of children with blindness.

3. Section of Education for the Low Vision

In this Section we are pursuing research aimed at providing education methods and materials matched to the needs of each low-vision child and applicable in various education venues, such as at schools for the blind- and in low vision classes, resource rooms and regular classes. As low-vision children vary considerably in their ability to see, they have different needs with regard to teaching methods, learning materials and environment.

We are therefore developing new teaching methods and materials that apply to individual needs and also an assessment test of functional vision to support this research.

In addition, we are conducting studies aimed at helping low-vision infants achieve full potential. Special attention is being placed on assisting these infants and their families through early involvement and educational consultation. The studies are moving forward in collaboration with several surrounding facilities, including hospitals, preschools, kindergartens

and schools for the blind.

Recent research projects include :

- 1) Study on a new textbooks, computer-based teaching materials and printed matter using large letters matched to individual eyesight.

- 2) Study on early support and consultation in low-vision infants, babies and their families.

CHIDA Koki

Director, Department of Education for Children with Visual Impairments

Department of Education for Children with Speech and Hearing Handicaps

Hearing impairment means difficulties in auditory perception and leads us to recognize the importance of appropriate education of the deaf and hard of hearing.

In the field of education for the deaf and hard of hearing, the method selecting and fitting hearing aid at young age, the effective use of Sign language and other manual system and the nature of language teaching are investigated. Educational support for students with hearing impairment in ordinary class is also studied.

Speech disorders sometimes lead children to the difficulty of interpersonal communication as well as retardation in articulation and language development.

In the field of education for the handicapped, we have conducted clinical studies on educational intervention and practical assistance for children through case studies, reconsidering "speech disorder" as "communication disorder" so that these studies could be informative to classroom teachers.

Department of education for children with speech and hearing handicaps is consisted of four sections. First is a section of education for the deaf, second is a section of education for the hard of hearing, third is a section of education for the functional speech disorder and fourth is a section of education for the organic speech disorder.

Each theme and activity of studies on those sections are as follows :

1. Section of Education for the deaf

Study on deaf awareness and participation into the society of deaf children

In several years, we have studied teacher attitudes

and behaviours to deafness in the school for the deaf. Those are important research issues in the field of deaf education. Those are largely due to the current paradigm shift in the concept of disability. The study proposes an original model of educational activity for deafness and other disabilities. The teaching of deaf children was analyzed using this model. Now we will continue the study to evaluate the deaf awareness.

2. Section of education for the hard of hearing

Development of teaching materials for understanding hearing handicaps and session with those

A questionnaire survey was conducted on session for understanding hearing handicap. The subject of this questionnaire survey concerned teachers of schools for the deaf, special units for hearing handicap in primary schools with experience in session for understanding hearing handicap in a class of primary school.



Hearing Aid Fitting Line System

(This system include the audiometer for infant, hearing aid programming device, and hearing aid test device.)

Next we would like to create the session with teaching materials for understanding hearing handicaps and to evaluate the session and teaching materials.

3. Section of education for the functional speech disorder

Educational counseling for young children and their parents

In recent years, there has been increasing emphasis on educational counselling and on the importance of parental intervention in this process. Then through some questionnaire and interview to early childhood caregivers and parents we have conducted clinical studies. Now we are analyzing the data about educational counseling for young children and their parents in cooperation with the teachers of "Tsukyu" (i. e. resource rooms) in primary schools.

4. Section of education for the organic speech disorder

Study on the construction of the communicative relationship between child and teacher

About some problematic issues concerning "relationship-theory" for the studies of communication disorders, a study has conducted to provide an overview of research in Japan on communication disorders and to examine problems that confront researchers in this field. Through the study some significant issues emerged. Then we will continue the study to create the construction of the communicative relationship between child and teacher.

SHISHIDO Kazunari

Director, Department of Education for Children with Speech and Hearing Handicaps

Disabled Students and IT Environments in Japanese Higher Education

These days, Japan is being urged by the public to take immediate measures to reform its universities in order to come to terms with decreasing freshman enrollment, internationalization, and the increasing demand for life-long education. Among the measures that will be major keys to the survival of universities in the future is the establishment of IT environments in academic research and education, and the creation of systems whereby students of diverse backgrounds - such as foreign students and adults - can be accepted for study.

In January 2002, the National Institute of Multimedia Education (NIME) conducted a survey based on mail-in questionnaires concerning disabled students ("Disabled students" as used here refers to persons having movement disorders, auditory disorders, visual disorders, health disorders, speech disorders, etc. It does not include persons with learning disability) and IT environments. This survey targeted

1,266 places of higher education throughout Japan (667 universities, 537 junior colleges, and 62 technical colleges), and the questionnaires were given to head quarters of institutions. We had response rates of 66% from universities, 60% from junior colleges, and 81% from technical colleges. In this paper, I intend to reflect on the current status of Japanese higher education and IT environments as identified in the survey.

Disabled Students in Higher Education

Of the respondents surveyed 66% of universities, 36% of junior colleges, and 34% of technical colleges indicated that they have disabled persons among their enrollments. However, it should be remembered that some students do not report their disabilities, and that actual conditions vary considerably from university to university.

Services for Disabled Students

Regarding the existence of support or

consultation services for disabled students, 31% of the universities responded that they have such services, followed by 19% for junior colleges and 16% for technical colleges. 10% of the universities reported that they had established an on-campus committee for disabled students, while the figure for junior colleges and technical colleges was 4% each. Although schools are taking on-site measures in this area - such as establishing offices to promote entrance by disabled students - the right for disabled students to study is not yet established by law as it is in the United States, Canada, and Australia. This makes it difficult in Japan to move forward with efforts to completely systematize acceptance and accommodation of disabled students.

On-campus IT environments and Disabled Students

Responses to the question, "Does your school list general syllabi and related information on lectures and classes on the Internet?" can be broken down as follows :

- Schools that list all syllabi and information on the Internet : universities : 19% ; junior colleges : 7% ; technical colleges : 20%.
- Schools that list most syllabi and information on the Internet : universities : 13% ; junior colleges : 4% ; technical schools : 8%.
- Schools that list around half of all syllabi and information on the Internet : universities : 4% ; junior colleges : 2% ; technical colleges : 4%.
- Schools that list no syllabi or information on the Internet : universities : 37% ; junior colleges : 65% ; technical colleges : 30%.

To the question, "Do you give consideration to accessibility by disabled persons when designing your websites?", approximately 70% of all three types of schools responded that they did not. In response to, "Do you make support information for disabled students available on your websites?", 1.5% of universities answered that they did, followed by 1% of

junior colleges and 0% of technical colleges.

Almost all webpages of higher education institutions in the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom - which are overwhelmingly superior in terms of quantity and quality of information - contain notations verifying that they include consideration for disabled accessibility in their design. The extremely limited amount of information made available on the websites of Japanese higher education institutions is an indication that, despite calls for IT application in improving acceptance of students with a variety of backgrounds and in enhancing research and lessons, these institutions have yet to become serious about making IT application a part of their operations.

In 1997, NIME conducted a survey entitled "Research on Higher Education for Disabled Students and Media Access, " that targeted approximately 30% of Japanese students with visual or hearing disabilities. From the results of this survey, we concluded that the students having the most ability and desire to quickly enjoy the fruits of media technology are none other than disabled students who have continually been left outside of the traditional higher education system. No matter how severe their disability, disabled persons have a high capacity to utilize media in higher education, and they are utilizing this technology to meet their individual needs. In efforts to revitalize higher education and life-long education as well as to promote media education, we are confident that media support to disabled students will go beyond simply helping those having certain disadvantages. In fact, we see it as a way of establishing a forward-thinking model for building a learning support system that meets the individual needs of all students. We believe that it is important for all higher education institutions to immediately reexamine their efforts to establish IT environments from a position that takes into account the viewpoints of their diverse student bodies.

HIROSE Yoko

Associate Professor

National Institute of Multimedia Education



From the Editors

We would like to thank all who contributed to this volume of newsletter.

It is possible to find out this newsletter at the homepage of our institute. We hope to communicate more information among many persons who are engaged in the education of children with SEN.

The next volume will be issued in February 2003, hence, we invite readers to submit news on recent development of special education and research, information on conferences, seminars or workshops, introductions of new teaching materials, newly established institutes or publications, so on.

We always welcome your supports to this newsletter by e-mail or by post.

On behalf of the editorial board
ISHIKAWA Masataka

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NISE international exchange activities
http://www.nise.go.jp/kokusai/index_e.html(in English)