

NISE Newsletter

for Special Education in Asia and the Pacific

No.21

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Greetings

The Organization of NISE will Change - To Contribute to the Education (Lifelong) of Children with Disabilities

From April 2004, the organization of the National Institute of Special Education (NISE) will be changed, from the present system composed of research departments and labs by type of disability, etc., to an organization for research, training, information supply and educational consultation centered around the NISE's principal operations.

It has been three years since the NISE became an "independent administrative institution" in April 2001, from a national research institute belonging to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and 32 years since it was initially established in October 1971.

The turning into an independent administrative institution was designed for the NISE to further promote special education, through such means as comprehensive implementation of practical researches related to special education and provision of specialized and technical training for teachers and others involved in special education. To achieve this aim, the NISE will endeavor to execute more useful operations for the public benefit, ensure the transparency of such operations, and widely make public the outcomes of such operations. This is by

achieving the medium-term plan (a five-year plan starting April 2001) determined by the NISE in accordance with the goals set by the national government, under free discretion utilizing the operational subsidies granted by the government, and by independently and autonomously carrying out the operations such as researches and training.

The NISE has played comprehensive and leading roles in Japan in the field of special education, and widely contributed to the society as a key research organization. In the future, it will also serve as a National Center for the education of children with disabilities, to execute such operations as researches to contribute toward national administrative policies and measures, practical researches to contribute toward educational activities, specialized training for the fostering of leaders, training that addresses the new issues, and support for educational consultation activities.

At the same time, it will contribute to the realization of education that meets the educational needs of individual disabled children, by cooperating and collaborating with universities and other related organizations. Moreover, it will actively promote joint researches and research exchanges, and endeavor to

collect and supply information related to the field of special education, and extend and utilize the relevant outcomes, based on the philosophy that the NISE can fulfill its functions only when its researches on educational contents and methods and the specialized training are actually utilized by the boards of education and schools.

The NISE will drastically change its 30-year organization and operation methods, from the present system of eight research departments by type of disability and two Centers, to a system of three divisions in charge of planning, researches for educational support, and educational training and

information, as well as one Educational Consultation Center so as to achieve the NISE medium-term plan, and based on the reports submitted by the Advisory Committee for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, as well as the evaluation by third party. The 18 research labs will all be abolished, to ensure efficient management of the NISE organization and operations, and to further promote autonomous researches and training programs.

NAKAYAMA Yoshihiro

Executive Director, NISE

Organizing policy for the 23rd Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education

Objective

To contribute to the development of special education in the Asia-Pacific region, the National Institute of Special Education (NISE) has, since 1981, hosted international seminars with attendance of representatives nominated by the UNESCO National Committees of member countries. This year, with the rapid progress of information-oriented societies in recent years as a background, NISE will hold a seminar themed "Utilization of ICT and Educational Support for Children with Disabilities." At the seminar, researchers, teachers and others playing a leading role in special education will meet together to make presentations and discussions on research, educational practices, and administrative measures related to the education of Children with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Seminar Theme

Utilization of ICT and Educational Support for Children with Disabilities

Hosted by :

The National Institute of Special Education
Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

Period/Venue

Period : Sunday, October 26th, 2003 through Friday, October 31st, 2003

Venue : The National Institute of Special Education (5-1-1 Nobi, Yokosuka City, Kanagawa, 239-0841 JAPAN)

Participants

- (1) Researchers, teachers and others playing a leading role in special education who nominated by the UNESCO National Committees of participating countries.
- (2) Poster session presenters
- (3) Special education teachers as well as educational supervisors and related persons from local boards of education.
- (4) Parents and others

Languages

English and Japanese

Seminar Description

Keynote speech, country reports, general discussions, study visit. Research presentations (poster session and equipment exhibition) will also be held at the seminar.

Country reports shall be related to policies and measures (including future plans) for the utilization of ICT in the education of Children with Disabilities as well as related topics as listed below.

- Utilization of ICT to overcome difficulties due to a disability
- Research and development of ICT-based assistive technologies
- Educational software related research and development
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices
- Examples of the utilization of ICT in the education of Children with Disabilities
- Training of teachers for the utilization of ICT
- Distance education utilizing ICT
- Others

Participating Countries

Fourteen countries including Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, The Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Travel and Accommodation Expenses

Travel and accommodation expenses for participants nominated by the UNESCO National Committees of participating countries will be paid by NISE.

Schedule

Sunday, October 26

Arrive in Japan

Monday, October 27

Opening ceremony / Keynote speech / Poster session

Tuesday, October 28

Country reports

Wednesday, October 29

Country reports / General discussions / Summary / Closing ceremony

Thursday, October 30

Study visit to NISE and the National Kurihama School for Children with Disabilities

Friday, October 31

Leave Japan

NAKAMURA Hitoshi

Chairperson

Executive Committee of the 23rd Asia-Pacific International Seminar on Special Education

Present State of Studies on Deaf Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

From the 8th Asia-Pacific Congress on Deafness (Taipei, Taiwan)

1. Preface

The International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED), which is a worldwide conference on the education for the hearing impaired, is being held every five years. In the Asia-Pacific region, the Asia-Pacific Congress on Deafness (APCD) is being held every two years. The APCD is held in the Asia-Pacific region separately from the ICED. Since its First was held in Hong Kong in 1986, its Eighth was held in

Taiwan in 2002. This paper reports on the present state of the studies conducted on the education for the hearing impaired in the Asia-Pacific region, based on what were reported in the 8th Asia-Pacific Congress on Deafness ("8th APCD") held in Taipei, Taiwan, from August 3 to 6, 2002.

2. Outline of the 8th APCD

The 8th APCD was participated by delegates

from the Asia-Pacific countries and regions namely Taiwan, Australia, China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Macau, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Canada and the United States. The participants totaled about 700. 150 presentations were made.

3. General Meeting

The General Meeting set up three main topics. The first was medical, educational and welfare services provided to deaf adults in Taiwan. The second concerned the cochlear implant, and the third concerned the latest trends related to deafness in the Asia-Pacific region.

Concerning the first topic of medical, educational and welfare services for deaf adults in Taiwan, four researchers made presentations. It is said that at present, there are 81,014 deaf children and adults in Taiwan. The country introduced the system of newborn hearing screening in November 1998 (Japan: in October 2000). However, problems were pointed out such as that the system of follow-up for the children diagnosed as hearing impaired and their families has not been established fully.

Regarding the second topic concerning the cochlear implant, the reports mainly concerned the situations in China and the HKSAR. Concerning changes in the auditory and linguistic capabilities after the cochlear implantation, while the case of adults stabilizes in one year, the case of children requires at least four years to stabilize. In China, it was reported that the speech audiometry for the cochlear implant has not been developed, so that the establishment of an objective system for assessing the effects of cochlear implantation has become a pressing need.

The third topic concerned the latest trends related to deafness in the Asia-Pacific region. Reported were training of deaf education teachers, trends of audiology (study of deafness) in the region, activities of the Hearing International, and evaluating the efficacy of Sign Bilingualism.

4. Committees

Committees were set up covering diverse fields centered around the education of deaf children - curricula for deaf children, care related to epidemics and hearing loss, sign language and deaf culture, countries' circumstances, auditory learning, guidance on reading and writing, support for deaf children and adults, early intervention, emotional development, and cochlear implant. Among these committees, this writer participated in the committees on newborn hearing screening and early intervention, support for deaf children and adults, and sign language and deaf culture.

The program for newborn hearing screening is a subject for frequent discussion in Japan also. It is also an area that is focusing the attention in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. China in particular has been administering this screening using the method of measuring the otoacoustic emissions (OAEs) covering all newborns whether they have disabilities or not, in and by setting up a model district supported by the government. In Taiwan, it was reported that of the 778 newborns who were administered this screening, 157 were found to have profound hearing impairments, and that many of these newborns are receiving care such as fitting of hearing aids by six to 12 months after birth.

Secondly, as for the support for deaf children and adults, many presentations concerned lesson support on the level of higher education. A delegate from Taiwan's National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) which hosted this time's Congress reported that it is pouring energy to the training of note takers for deaf students. This report was followed by discussions on the matters to be noted and issues related to this training. A delegate from the National Tainan Normal University reported that it has introduced the sign language to promote deaf students to study with normal students and that this has been producing learning effects in lessons, etc. This report also mentioned that similar effects were also confirmed on the levels of kindergartens and elementary schools. As a member of this committee, this writer reported on the studies relating to lessons for the understanding of deafness.

Thirdly, as for deaf culture, opinions were exchanged based on reports made by delegates from diverse countries. However, there are countries where

people have accepted the existence of the deaf culture and those where people have not accepted even the existence of such culture. My impression was that there were considerable differences in the degree of understanding about the deaf culture.

5. In concluding

The APCD is meant to cover the entire Asia-Pacific region. However, it was not participated by such countries as Nepal, Mongolia, India, Cambodia and Bangladesh. It cannot be said that the APCD truly covers the entire Asia-Pacific region. In the future,

from the viewpoint of international cooperation, one possibility might be to use the Internet to make public the researches presented in meetings such as this.

The next APCD was scheduled to be held in the HKSAR in 2004. However, due to circumstances, this plan was aborted, and the next APCD will be held in Japan in 2006 (and not in 2004).

SATO D. S. Masayuki

Department of Education for Children with Speech and Hearing Handicap, NISE

Special Research Projects

Research & Development of Multimedia Information System for Special Education

This project has entered its third year this April. Concerning the use of multimedia in special education, it is conducting practical researches by organizing the following three groups.

- 1) The group to examine ways to improve the accessibility features, including input and output, for children with disability to use the Internet and multimedia materials (Multimedia Use Environment Group).
- 2) The group to examine the possibility of providing, and the issues to be noted, educational consultation using a TV conference system connecting the National Institute of Special Education (NISE), special education centers, special education schools, special classes, etc. (TV Conference Group).
- 3) The group to examine the possibility of using educational contents (including distribution of video clips on demands) in special education and the issues to be noted (Educational Contents Group).

The Multimedia Use Environment Group has developed a drawing system for children with visual impairment called "Tactile Graphic Display with Pen Input Function" (Photo 1). It is also conducting a

research on interactive computer interface for the education of children with intellectual disability making the best use of the communication capabilities of personal robots. The Educational Contents Group



Photo 1. "Tactile Graphic Display with Pen Input Function" that allows drawing and erasing of figures any number of times by touching the figures real-time



Photo 2. By means of its implemented step scan method, the Passo a Passo Browser allows one-switch users to browse web pages freely.



Photo 3. Passo a Passo startup screen

has trial produced the "Passo a Passo", an auto scan browser for the children with physical disability (Photo 2). The TV Conference Group is conducting researches on the effective methods to use the TV conference system by actively supporting the diverse training programs provided by and conferences held in educational training centers and schools.

These project outcomes will be practically evaluated and improved on the actual site of education during the period from April to October 2003. The equipment and systems developed through the project will be put to wide use in classrooms and educational consultation services in a near future. The project's three-year outcomes will be summarized and published by the end of this fiscal year.

Representative Researcher :

NAKAMURA Hitoshi

Director, Department of Information and Educational Technology, NISE

Open Lecture on CHARGE (Association) Syndrome

In Japan, the number of medical institutions that have experience in diagnosing CHARGE syndrome is still limited. The availability of information on the consequences of the diversified medical issues on the development of children with CHARGE is limited as well. In response to the strong request from parents and in fulfilling a mission of the National Institute of Special Education to promote research and services for rare disabilities, the Open Lecture on CHARGE Syndrome was organized and held on March 23, 2003.

Two experts on CHARGE syndrome were invited as lecturers from the United States - Dr. Sandra L. H. Davenport (sensory genetics / neuro-development) and

Prof. Meg Hefner (genetic counseling, St. Louis University School of Medicine). They are the editors of "CHARGE Syndrome : A Management Manual for Parents" which is the most extensive and thorough manual available currently on this complex syndrome. It serves both families and medical practitioners. The author took the role of interpreting during the lecture with the help of Dr. KAWAME Hiroshi on medical terms. Dr. Kawame is a medical geneticist of Nagano Prefectural Children's Hospital who has been very active in supporting children with CHARGE in Japan.

Reflecting the wide spectrum of needs this syndrome brings about, the open lecture attracted diverse participants from all over Japan, totaling almost

two hundred; namely, family members of children with CHARGE, deafblind consumers, professionals in the field of education and child care, medical doctors (genetics, pediatrics, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, dentistry), professionals in nursing, speech and occupational therapists, and researchers.

CHARGE syndrome refers to children with a specific set of birth defects.

CHARGE is known in Japan as an "association," but the term "syndrome" was chosen at this Open Lecture respecting the research results of Dr. Davenport which indicate the relevance of using the latter term. CHARGE originally came from the first letter of some of the most common features seen in these children :

- C = coloboma, cranial nerve abnormalities
- H = heart defects,
- A = atresia of the choanae,
- R = retardation of growth and development,
- G = genital and urinary abnormalities,
- E = ear abnormalities and/or hearing loss.



CHARGE syndrome often causes "deafblindness." In addition to the distinctive educational needs resulting from deafblindness, CHARGE syndrome gives rise to other unique needs calling for a close cooperation among family, medical/paramedical experts and educational professionals. The Open Lecture not only promoted the sharing of information on this syndrome but also triggered a movement toward a better cooperation among the diverse people who were present at the lecture.

(This open lecture was supported by Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) (2) 14310145.)

NAKAZAWA Megue

Department of Education for Children with Multiple Disabilities, NISE





Dear Colleagues :

On behalf of the editorial board, We would like to thank all those who contributed to this volume of newsletter. It is possible to find out this newsletter at the homepage of NISE.

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 2004, 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 institute or publications, especially about education for children with deaf-blind or the other multiple disabilities.

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

On behalf of the editorial board
ISHIKAWA Masataka

Editorial Board

SAITO Ukai
KAIZU Akiko
ONO Tatsunori
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NISE international exchange activities
http://www.nise.go.jp/kokusai/index_e.html(in English)