

A comparison of the process of producing an “Easy-Read CRPD” in Japan and Taiwan

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◆ Background · Purpose · Methods

【Background—1】

- ‘Access to Information’ is considered one of the rights of people with disabilities.
- Persons with a visual disability should be able to access information using methods such as Braille or audio recordings.
- Persons with a hearing impairment should be able to access information using methods such as sign language.
- Persons with an intellectual disability should be able to access information provided in plain language, an easy-read style, or other methods.

【Background—2】

- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is a convention about the ‘rights’ of people with disabilities.
- Japan and Taiwan both ratified the CRPD in 2014.
- In 2009, an ‘Easy-Read CRPD’ was published in Japan. A traditional Chinese version was published in Taiwan in 2017. Both of these ‘Easy-Read CRPD’ texts were published by parents’ associations for people with intellectual disabilities.

【Purpose】

- This research aims to discuss the background and process of producing Easy-Read CRPD texts in Japan and in Taiwan, and also attempts to determine the role people with intellectual disabilities played in the creation of these documents.

【Methods】

- Analysis of materials such as program documents and meeting notes.
- Interviews with the persons in charge and other participants.

◆ Results : the backgrounds between Japan and Taiwan

【Japan】

- The idea came from a scholar : Prof. Osamu Nagase (then Asia Pacific delegate to Inclusion International)
- ① Prof. Nagase participated in meetings to negotiate the CRPD draft at the UN, and saw Robert Martin, a delegate with an intellectual disability from New Zealand, negotiating with other delegates. This inspired him to transmit the CRPD to people with intellectual disabilities in Japan.
- ② As the leader of the International Activity Committee of Inclusion Japan, Prof. Nagase was well-positioned to undertake this project via this organization.

【Taiwan】

- The idea came from a parents’ association : the Parents’ Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, Taiwan (PAPID, Taiwan)
- ① The staff noticed that other persons with disabilities in Taiwan discussed the CRPD actively but without the voices of persons with intellectual disabilities. The staff therefore came up with the idea of conveying the CRPD to people with intellectual disabilities.
- ② In addition, in 2014 PAPID invited Prof. Nagase to a conference that aimed to launch Easy-Read Information to share experiences from Japan and other countries.

◆ Results : the producing process between Japan and Taiwan

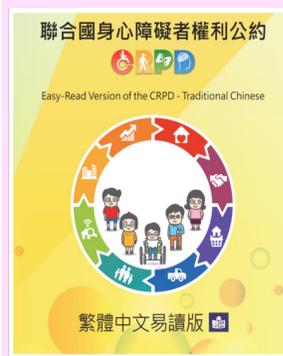
【Japan】 August 2007 to December 2008

- The **First Stage : Working Team** → rewrite the articles in plain language
 - ▷ Members : 4 persons including 1 person with an intellectual disability, 1 supporter, 1 international student, and an expert (Prof. Nagase).
 - ▷ The expert explained the CRPD and its articles, then all of the members rewrote and translated the articles into plain language after each meeting. In each meeting they worked on 1~2 articles. They then brought their results to the next meeting to discuss with the other members. Out of these discussions they produced a draft of the CRPD articles in easy-read Japanese.
 - ▷ They started from the articles most directly related to daily life. For example, they started by rewriting Article 19, which is about ‘independent living’, moved on to Article 24, which is about ‘education’, and then turned to Article 27, which is about ‘occupation and work’.
- The **Second Stage : Editorial Board** → edit the overall composition
 - ▷ Members : 5 board members including 1 person with an intellectual disability, 1 supporter, 2 parents, and an expert (Prof. Nagase). 2 staff members of Inclusion Japan also participated.
 - ▷ The board members worked on illustrations, page layout, work sheets, etc.
 - ▷ They then organized a ‘study group’ to present the Easy-Read CRPD draft in order to receive more advice from other people with intellectual disabilities. They then corrected the draft according to this advice.



【Taiwan】 March 2017 to November 2017

- The **Study Group** → aim to relate CRPD to personal experience and train the participants with intellectual disabilities as lecturers
 - ▷ Members : 21 people including 10 persons with intellectual disabilities, 7 supporters, 1 expert, 3 staff of PAPID. There were also 2 government workers who attended some meetings
 - ▷ The PAPID staff divided the themes and planned the times of meetings in advance, then all members discussed the articles in this order.
- For example, ‘equity and no discrimination’ for Article 5, ‘about disability’ for Articles 6, 7, and 8, ‘legal rights’ for Articles 12 and 13, ‘the right to life of people with disabilities’ for Articles 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 17, ‘communication and privacy’ for Articles 9, 21 and 22, ‘independent living’ for Articles 18, 19, 20 and 23, etc. until Article 30.
- ▷ Each participant chose 2 themes which interested them to prepare. There were 2 participants with intellectual disabilities and 1 supporter who reported on each theme to other participants, and all the participants discussed the topic each time.
 - ▷ In the process, the PAPID staff revised the articles in plain language in traditional Chinese and worked on illustrations and page layout. In the last study group gathering, all the participants reviewed the draft and provided their opinions.



◆ Discussion and Conclusion

【Discussion】	Japan	Taiwan
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea came from an expert. • The Easy-Read version was made before the government ratified CRPD. • Producing the Easy-Read CRPD was the main purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea came from a staff member. • The Easy-Read version was made after the government ratified CRPD. • Producing the Easy-Read CRPD was one of several purposes.
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participants were diverse, and included persons with intellectual disabilities, supporters, an international student, parents, and an expert. Also, the participants were different in the two stages which allowed for varying supplementary viewpoints. • A person with an intellectual disability participated in each stage. • All the participants were from the Kanto Area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without distinguishing stages, the participants were almost completely limited to people with intellectual disabilities and supporters who had participated in the Self-Advocacy Network organized by PAPID. • Half of the participants were persons with an intellectual disability. • The participants gathered from different areas in Taiwan.
The tasks of participants with intellectual disability and an	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were responsible for the same tasks as other participants without disabilities. • They participated in practical work like revising the articles or arranging the page layout, and also provided their opinions. • Besides the participants, some other people with intellectual disabilities provided their opinions as ‘inspectors’ in the production process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were responsible for the same tasks as other participants without disabilities. • The main tasks were to understand the themes and the related content, and also to provide their experiences and opinions related to each theme. • The PAPID staff made the draft and showed it to the participants to ‘check’ at the last gathering.
Effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the participants understood the CRPD through the process of producing the Easy-Read version. • Including the participants with intellectual disabilities, all of the participants promoted the CRPD as a person concerned. • During the production process, the participants with intellectual disabilities had the opportunity to get to know other persons with intellectual disabilities, and were able to participate actively in activities organized for/with people with intellectual disabilities. • The parents who participated changed their attitude when dealing with people with intellectual disabilities. • After completing the Easy-Read CRPD, the participants with intellectual disabilities felt this version was ‘still too hard’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the participants understood the CRPD through the process of discussing it. • The participants with intellectual disabilities promoted the CRPD as a person concerned. • Some participants with intellectual disabilities recognized their own rights, and became interested in news and social events related to human rights and the rights of people with disabilities. They began to regularly talk about the news and discuss such stories. • After completing the Easy-Read CRPD, the participants with intellectual disabilities felt this version was ‘still too hard’.

【Conclusion】

- Both in Japan and in Taiwan, experts came up with the idea of delivering the CRPD in an Easy-Read format since people with intellectual disabilities did not know about the CRPD at that stage. The initiatives were thus focused on the ideas introduced by experts, and people with intellectual disabilities who were interested in participating in these programs were then recruited to take part.
- During the production process, the experts both in Japan and in Taiwan created opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to participate that followed the spirit of ‘Nothing about us without us’ which CRPD emphasizes. The participants had equal roles in the process in both countries. However, unlike the participants with intellectual disabilities in Japan who were involved in the actual production work, those in Taiwan focused on providing their experiences and checking what was produced.
- Looking at the results, the Japanese and Taiwanese Easy-Read CRPD versions are still considered difficult to understand, but through the opportunities to meet and participate in the process all participants – not only the participants with intellectual disabilities – came to understand the legal document and the abstract concept of ‘rights’ to some extent in both countries. Through the production process the participants with intellectual disabilities recognized what rights they should have, and the parents or supporters who participated also gradually changed their viewpoints and attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities.
- Like the CRPD, other information that is important for people with disabilities is complex and difficult to understand, and if experts could spend more time to deliver information in an easy-to-understand way it could be expected to reach to more non-experts and people concerned.

The Japanese Easy-Read CRPD is republished in September 2019 ! !

