



# HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The job of edition and publication of this volume is the first one for me as the Editor in full charge. Frankly speaking, I could not have been so sure if I can get enough number of papers for this volume. What particularly concerned me was how many papers I can receive from abroad. However, the Heaven didn't forsake me. Responding to my wishful call for contribution, the authors in this volume very kindly prepared five interesting articles. The Editor sincerely wishes to express special thankfulness for their generous cooperation.

Taking a look at the titles of the papers included here, the readers may see some common key words for child development research. They are 'dynamic', 'system', 'structure', 'relation', 'interaction', 'context', and 'culture'. Though it is only a simple word game, we may coin a new catch phrase for child development. It is 'Developmental DISC'. 'D' of the 'DISC' stands for 'dynamic', 'I' for 'interaction' (including 'relation'), 'S' for 'system' and 'structure', and 'C' is for 'context' and 'culture'.

Holistic and global views are now prevailing not only in psychology but in almost all disciplines and many sectors of popular thinking. This trend may be taken as a reaction to the over-emphasis on analysis, particularly in natural sciences in the past.

About three decades ago, we, as undergraduates, were taught that psychology is a discipline of human consciousness and behavior. Here, of course, the term 'consciousness' is explained to include 'sub-conscious' and 'unconscious', and 'behavior' is to mean both 'overt' and 'covert'. Needless to say, there were some sub-disciplines of psychology which deal with relational and collective aspects of human mind and behavior. But the main stream at that time was the psychology of individuals. 'Consciousness' and 'behavior' were confined in individual persons. More strictly speaking, it appeared that psychological phenomena are almost exclusively the ones that happen within border of each person's skin. This is the way criticized by our saying, "Looking at a tree without seeing the forest."

As many great thinkers say, nothing exists in isolation. And everything exists in motion; even resting posture is a mode of motion. Thus, it is quite natural and correct that researchers have come to emphasize the importance of holistic, dynamic, and relativistic perspectives.

But here I dare to propose that we can never belittle the importance of analytical approach. Analysis and synthesis are the 'face and back of a same coin' and two basic tools of human intellectual search for truth and the laws. It is equally erroneous to stress too much on analysis and individuals or on synthesis and the whole. Parts are embedded in the whole, and the whole comprises of parts. 'Relation' is existent between two or more things and events. 'Interaction' is the process among two or more factors and agents. Infallible understanding of 'relation' and 'interaction' can be obtained only through careful and intensive analyses of the unitary things, events, factors, or agents.

Stated above is one of my urgent concerns and reflects discussions in seminars

and informal talks at our Center.

All the papers in this volume are relevant to the topic and may give important hints for further exploration.

Now, it is the beginning of a year, and people talk about 'New Year's Dream'. As Director of the RCCCD and as the Editor of its Annual Report, I have some 'dreams' too. In addition to what our forerunners did, we would like to launch some new programs. Among others, we like to think of offering several extension courses of child development and education for preschool teachers and other interested citizen. We will also be planning to hold annually in summer an international symposium on the issues of preschool education, family, and child development.

Publication of the Annual Report is of course one of the most essential enterprises of the Center, and we want to further the job by applying new ideas to its content and style. As an attempt, in this volume is included 'RCCCD ROSTER', by which the readers may know something of the organization and membership of the Center. The Annual Report has not had so far any established codes and format for edition. We may think of minimal guidelines for preparing papers in the future. But we also like to avoid to make it very rigid and unaccessible. We welcome any papers, short or long, experimental or theoretical, in a form of academic dissertation or in essay type.

The subsequent volume of the Report will have a column of "CROSSROADS", to which the contributors may write about proposal for collaborative research or academic meetings, or book reviews or about some personal message to the expected readers. We expect the column to play the role of a newsletter. We do hope to make our Center a real 'center' for international exchange of child development research where many professionals meet either in person or through papers and communication.