

## **The History of DICE, the UK-Japan Drama Education Exchange Project**

**Nobuko Okamoto**

**8<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

### **My experiences as an observer at secondary schools in London**

**In 2008, I studied drama education under the supervision of Kenneth Taylor in London as a researcher supported by the Japanese government (Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists) for a year. During my research, I managed to go to fourteen different public and private secondary schools in London.**

**As an observer, I joined various classes at different times.**

**In some cases, I went back to the same school several times.**

**It was interesting to see a variety of classes.**

**In some classes, they were focusing on being the character while others focused more on intellectual aspects of drama where they explored different elements. Also, there were some challenging and active classes.**

**In addition to the classroom works, I went to see their parade in costumes with music bands, school plays and talent shows they did in the evening and experimental theatre pieces they showed at schools.**



### **Founding DICE, the Drama Education Exchange Project**

**Drama teachers I met in the UK loved drama, engaged honestly with their students and were confident in their teaching methods. By witnessing how they worked I realized that 'If there are one hundred drama teachers, there are one hundred different ways of teaching', which might sound obvious but is easy to forget. Drama teachers in the UK were great as they were flexible and constantly making efforts to make the classes interesting for their students.**



**When I came back to Japan, I did not want to keep what I learnt from those experiences inside myself. That is why I founded DICE in September 2009. It was Kenneth Taylor who came up with the name, DICE. He told me, 'DICE means change or chance'. DICE does not stand for anything. It is a Drama Education Exchange Project that put children in the centre, and it will change keep changing.**

**Based on the brain storming work at the first DICE in London .**

**[DICE connection.pdf \(minnanoki8.com/DICE%20connection.pdf\)](http://minnanoki8.com/DICE%20connection.pdf)**

## Holding DICE in Japan

DICE had a great start with the theme, 'Always cherish and enjoy others' different points of view'. In 2010, 'NPO Rhythmics Gifu' in Japan supported the program. At that time, we managed to invite two Drama teachers from London and collaborated with Japanese Drama teachers to teach Japanese students.

In 2011, a huge earthquake hit Japan and we were not sure if we could hold the program.

However, one of the Drama teachers from London, despite the objections from his family members, came to Japan to join us. (See PDF for Mr Dominic Corey's report)

Since then, big scale earthquakes have been occurring and I decided to invite only those Drama teachers I know as I do not want to make new members worry too much. Even with such difficulties, we have managed to invite ten Drama teachers in total until 2019. (Drama teachers from the UK paid for their own flights.)



1 ; NPO Rhythmics Gifu' in Japan (see the organiser's message)

She is the organizer from 2010 to 2019. Messages from Drama teachers participated in DICE. [出崎恭子 \(minnanoki8.com/dezaki.html\)](http://minnanoki8.com/dezaki.html)

2 ; Kaori Kawamura (piano teacher/ rhythmics instructor)

[川村香織 \(minnanoki8.com/kaori.html\)](http://minnanoki8.com/kaori.html)

2 ; Dominic Corey's report (DICE in Japan 2011)

[Dom DICE.pdf \(minnanoki8.com/Dom%20DICE.pdf\)](http://minnanoki8.com/Dom%20DICE.pdf)

3 ; Nikki Kafouris's report (DICE in Japan 2017,2018)

[from Nikki.pdf \(minnanoki8.com/from%20Nikki.pdf\)](http://minnanoki8.com/from%20Nikki.pdf)

4 ; Shani Ben-Aroya's report (DICE in London 2009, DICE in Japan 2013,2014,2019)

[Shani Ben En.pdf \(minnanoki8.com/Shani%20Ben%E3%80%80En.pdf\)](http://minnanoki8.com/Shani%20Ben%E3%80%80En.pdf)

## Future DICE



All of us on this planet are now fighting against COVID-19. Unfortunately, we cannot meet face to face now.

But we have SNS or websites where we can communicate. We will keep admiring and respecting each other and keep communicating until we can meet in person. We will always be connected.

DICE will continue its activities with all the great people in the field of Drama education in the UK, with all the supporters of DICE in Japan and all the children who will form our future.

