

Nikkei Peru Children and Heritage Language

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After revision of "The Immigration Control and The Refugee Recognition Law" in 1990, the population of Japanese descent from the South America increased rapidly. The longer they stay in Japan, the more serious the child's language education become. The writer got cooperation from Nikkei Peruvian for conducting the participant-observation and interview at Saturday School for one year. The writer did not see that Spanish-Japanese speaking children were having a problem with conversation, however they were having problems with reading, writing and culture in Spanish.

As migrant workers, it was common that a husband move to Japan alone at the beginning. While separation is prolonged, divorce rate increases rapidly, and it becomes a big social problem in Peru. To solve this problem, the three major Japanese companies started the correspondence language education system PEAD for migrant workers' children. Unfortunately, PEAD is not perfect. In Peru, First graders of elementary school learn the break of a word, but the students who are in PEAD system do not know how far the one word continues even they are older than first grade. Parents say the Spanish comprehension of their children is not the same as in Peru because of the teachers who are not proper language teachers. But the real problems; Children's low motivation, lack of the time, hardness of finding teachers and financial problem. In a classroom, students from various ages and levels study together. In order to control the students and their study, teachers have to have mature teaching skills and experience. However, teachers' salaries depend on parents' monthly fee of 15,000 yen per student; that is not easy to pay for parents. Low salary is not attractive for the experienced teacher.

In Ota-shi, Gumma, the Portuguese language support system started in April 2005 for

the Brazilian children to help their early Japanese Language acquisition. There is still no Spanish support program for the people from Peru. Why can't we prepare the time to learn foreign children's mother language in public education curriculum and employee teachers? I strongly hope that Iseaki-shi, the biggest city of Nikkei Peruvian, step forward to prepare the mother language education within public education curriculum as Ota-shi did for Portuguese. In conclusion, I would like to study the possibility of a well-balanced bilingual education system in the Japanese public education system with the Peru school.