

# International Cooperation in Education in Thailand

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**要約**：今日まで、国際協力分野と教育分野にはあまり接点がなかった。しかし、グローバル化の影響下で、国際関係と教育の両分野は次第に近づき、更に“協力”という概念を持ち込むことによって、新しい研究分野である「国際教育協力」が成立している。本稿では、国際教育協力がいかなる過程を経て新たな研究分野となりえたかを指摘すると同時に、同分野におけるタイ国の現状について述べる。

**Key words** : Cooperation, Teacher education, Professional development

## 1. Introduction

Not until today international cooperation had no any contact with the field of education. In the past, a term like international relation was more familiar with us than international cooperation. However, this is true in the field of diplomatic politics or international affairs. The influence of globalization brings these two fields – international relations and education-come closer. Today these two fields have been merging into a new field with “cooperation” as a linkage term. This merging generates a field International Cooperation in Education as a new area of study. This paper aims at providing how international cooperation in education becomes a new area of study and also at describing the status of this new field in the case of Thailand.

## 2. International Cooperation in Education as a new field of study

Education in a broadest sense includes every thing. Thus, education as a field of study is always a fruitful area for investigation as long as we can find a new methodology which is suitable for our purpose. In a sense, it is not a new idea to find common problems in education encountered in many countries but trying to solve these common problems from the point of view of international cooperation is a very new idea. Even though we are living in the competitive world, the idea of international cooperation in education is still a promising

idea. In short, we can build our strength through international cooperation in education.

To illustrate what does it mean to a new field of study. For example, in the field of education “teacher education” has a long history. In the modern era, when western style of education has influenced education system in many parts of the world, the idea of “normal school” had been spread out. Many countries adopted this kind of teacher training school and have been being used until today. Kyoiku daigaku (University of Education) in Japan, Shiha Daigaku (Normal University of Education) in China and Wittayalai Khroo (Teachers’ Colleges) in Thailand are examples of adopting of normal school from the United States.

Teacher education in those countries has undergone many experiences. Some problems are common but some are different. These problems are also the problems of countries where they have just adopted this system recently. Approaching the problem from International Cooperation point of view such as International Cooperation in Teacher Education would be an effective way to deal with the problem. When teacher educators and school teachers from many countries cooperate to solve the problem such as how to develop teaching approach to meet the educational reform in their countries, the first problem they solved is that they feel relax when they learned that not only “you” has the such kind of the problem. This feeling also empowers them to attempt to solve the problem continually. To name just a few, among them these sub-fields of education are interesting for

further investigation in this era: International Cooperation in IT Education, International Cooperation in Educational Development.

### 3. The Status of International Cooperation in Education in Thailand

In order to understand the status of international cooperation in Thailand this session will analyze Thai government policy concerning this issue. The following excerpts are five main objectives of current government on foreign policy.

- 1) Conduct foreign policy with an emphasis on proactive economic diplomacy as well as other forms of diplomacy with a view to restoring and strengthening Thailand's *international relations* as well as seeking international cooperation in all fields.
- 2) Uphold the principles of security, development and international peace building with a view to enhancing justice under the framework of the United Nations and related international organizations of which Thailand is a member.
- 3) Promote a more proactive role for Thailand in the international community by expanding closer *international cooperation and relations* between ASEAN member countries and countries in East Asia, South Asia and other regions as well as by acting as a coordinator in pursuing cooperation for peacekeeping and prevention of international conflicts in the region.
- 4) Promote, preserve and protect the country's rights and national interests including those of Thailand's private sector, Thai laborers and Thai citizens abroad.
- 5) Expediently restore and strengthen Thailand's relations and developmental cooperation with its neighbors and other Asian countries by pursuing or initiating *relations and developmental cooperation* in all fields, both bilaterally and multilaterally, with a view to fostering good understanding in resolving problems and sharing mutual benefits in a constructive, sincere and peaceful manner.

From the italic words Thailand has turn her attention to the filed international cooperation in general but not specific to education. Education in Thailand has been perceived in the traditional ways such as curriculum and instruction, evaluation, psychology, or educational technology. While most of educational institutions still focus on educational problems and solve the problems in that ways, some are seeking new

ways to focus and solve educational problems from the point of view on international cooperation in education. The following activities are some examples which the Center for Research in Mathematics Education at the Faculty of Education of Khon Kaen University in Thailand has initiated during the last five years by cooperation with international institution.

#### • Cooperation in Mathematics and Science Education



Intensive Workshop on Mathematics Communication for Thai young staff by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emori Hideyo from Gunma University of Japan during November 2005



Workshop on Social and Cultural Aspects of Mathematics Education by Prof. Dr. Alan J. Bishop from Monash University of Australia



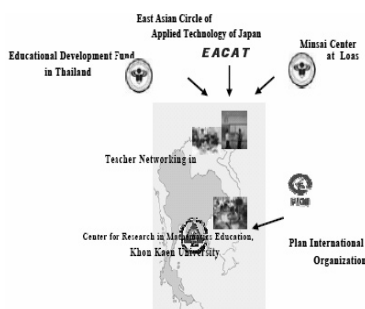
Workshop on Creativity in Mathematics Education by Prof. Dr. Noboru Saito and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Miyo Akita from Naruto University of Education, Japan during September 2004 at the Faculty of Education in Khon Kaen University

- **Cooperation among APEC economies Jan 14-20, 2006**



Researcher from each economy presented a paper in APEC-Tsukuba International Conference

- **Cooperation in Teacher Training in the Great Mekhong Sub-region countries**



- **Hoshino Project: With funding support of Minsai Center and EACAT. CRME and Faculty of Sciences, Khon Kaen University run the Hoshino Project to organize training for science and mathematics teachers from Lao PDR.**



A teacher trainee implemented her lesson plan in the actual classroom where her role has been changed from explanation to observation



One of 1st year trainees becomes a trainer in the 3rd year

- **With the cooperation of PLAN International Organization, CRME organized workshop for develop new kind of lesson plan using Open Approach during April, 2004**



Effective lesson plan started from teachers construct their own plan based on new innovation and implement their plan in the actual classroom with reflection with experts



To participate in In-country training in Salavan, Lao PDR as outsider observers with cooperation to International Cooperation Center for the Teacher Education and Training, Naruto University of Education during February 20-24, 2006

- **Cooperation in Information and Technology Education**



Cooperation among Great Mekhong region countries

- **Integration of Research in the Graduate School and Professional Development**



Graduate Students' participation in workshop enhance their experiences on teaching where as help them searching for their research problem which closely related to actual problems in schools

#### **4. Concluding Remarks**

What can be learned from a Thai experience described in the last session is that our old and common educational problems in many countries can be gradually resolved by starting to view those problems from international cooperation point of view. The most influential aspect of international cooperation is that it creates a sense of “we are in the same boat and has to overcome our problems.” This, in turn, creates different points of view from international cooperation which will be a good start to solve any problem.

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