



Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf

by Kathleen S. Smith

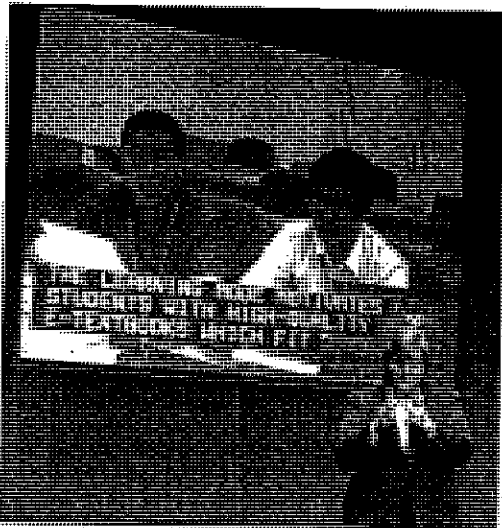


Photo by Mark Benjamin

Cheng Li of Tsinghua University of Technology, China, using videoconference technology to deliver his paper.

Professionals in Deaf education gathered for the second International Symposium on Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf in Rochester, New York, United States, 23–27 June 2003. Building on the success of the first symposium held in 2001, this event brought together nearly 300 professionals from 12 countries who came to learn about the most innovative, cutting-edge technology available for those who teach Deaf students of all ages worldwide.

The symposium was sponsored by the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology, the Nippon Foundation of Japan, and the Postsecondary Education Network-International (PEN-International). PEN-International is based at NTID and is funded by The Nippon Foundation. (See WFD NEWS, December 2001, p. 37.)


International to widen the reach of educational technology innovations within the United States and to reach out to colleges and universities around the world. Since its founding in 2001, PEN-International has established high-tech laboratories in China, Japan, the Philippines, and the Russian Federation and has trained hundreds of university teachers worldwide. Its goal is to bring 21st century technology to Deaf students around the world.

“The extraordinary talent and expertise of NTID made this symposium possible and also serves as the foundation for PEN-International’s positive influence on postsecondary education around the world,” said Dr. James J. DeCaro, immediate past dean for NTID and director of PEN-International.

One highlight of the symposium was the use of videoconferencing tech-

nology, which brought together participants from China, the Philippines, and Rochester for two workshops on the use of technology with students who are Deaf. “We had more than 70 Chinese and Filipino participants join us in these workshops,” said Professor E. William Clymer, symposium chairperson and coordinator of PEN-International. “These trans-Pacific interactive learning opportunities were a smashing success.”

A goal of the symposium was to make the information presented available on the symposium website for worldwide dissemination. Each presentation, poster summary, and abstract is available, as are complete papers. Photographs of the presenter(s) and captioned video presentations of each plenary and concurrent session also are available. In addition to this dazzling array of technology, conference organizers offered a unique cultural experience for participants. Unforgettable memories were created by three Japanese Taiko drumming troupes that appeared, courtesy of the Nippon Taiko Foundation. These energetic, rhythmic drummers (one troupe was comprised of Deaf drummers) twice entertained packed audiences in Panara Theatre at NTID. “The marvelous blend of cultural artistry and sheer athleticism of these three troupes were enjoyed by all,” said Dr DeCaro. They added a unique aesthetic dimension to the symposium.”

NTID and PEN-International plan to co-host the next symposium in June 2005. 

To view captioned video or text of this year’s symposium presentations, please visit www.rit.edu/~techsym.

Kathleen S. Smith is currently a professional writer working with PEN-International. She previously worked at NTID as a writer, editor, and public information manager.

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