

# **Rani's Interview**

## A pioneer who introduced Indian Mathematics

Indian mathematics has entered Japan!

Mrs. Rani introduced Indian Mathematics to the mass media is the editorial supervisor of this book. We talked to her about how Indian mathematics was introduced to Japan, her school and her recommendations about Indian Mathematics.

# -Please tell us about how Indian mathematics was introduced to Japan.

Rani: It seems, originally, AERA magazine wanted to write an article on the theme of education. During the process of locating an appropriate place for coverage, they heard about the kindergarten run by an Indian and they requested me for coverage. They saw our methods of teaching in the kindergarten and during our conversation, they informed us that in an IQ test held by a cram school that prepares children for entrance examination tests for a primary school, the students from the Little Angels International Kindergarten scored extraordinarily higher points. That was the first time our kindergarten was reported in the media.

### -That means it was a coverage from the educational point of view.

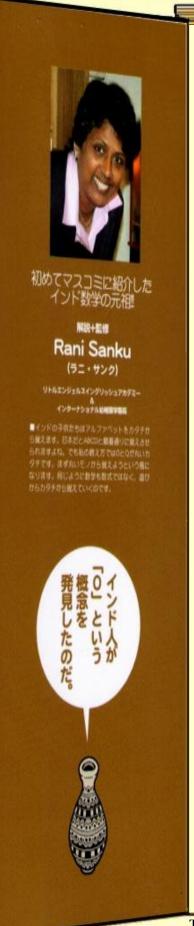
Rani: The article had mentioned that I had prepared a unique educational program based on Indian educational philosophy, which had quite an impact and led to media coverage by different TV stations.

# -Is it true that Indian children are familiar with Mathematics right from childhood?

Rani: Let me tell you about my childhood. I feel we were exposed to mathematics through games and stories. I used to play a counting game of 'odd and even' with acorns and so, I remembered odd and even numbers automatically. I also discovered subtraction (Indian style) in a similar manner, when I had to find out how many more acorns my friend had even before I entered primary school.

## -What kind of education did you have in Indian school?

Rani: Whether it is a kindergarten or a primary school, the teacher is an absolute entity. We start memorizing times tables in the first grade of primary school. The method of remembering these is extremely rigid. Every morning, we had to recite by rote the times tables that we had memorized. In India, the times tables requirements are till 19x19. In some schools it is 30x30. Those who us, who couldn't memorize were made to recite them standing alone, and those who couldn't do it at all were caned severely. When I remember those events, I feel that school was a painful place to be in, but I don't have the feeling that it was a scary place.



## -You got married and came to Japan. Did you face any problems?

Rani: I started my life in Japan in Kyoto, and I was really surprised when saw the Japanese preschools Children are taught basic life skills in the preschools here. As compared to Indian preschools, which are rigid, I thought these were wonderful things.. However, I thought, as child's brain develops rather fast from the age of 2 till 5, there could have been more brain stimulating activities for the children. That thought lead to the formation of this school

#### -Tell us something about international school.

Rani: Japanese approach to primary school teaching is excellent. However, as I told you earlier, it is very important to develop the thinking ability at the preschool age. Referring to the Indian approach and what they have tried to achieve, I brought in the thought of learning through the mode of playing games. That is also when I thought of forming the Little Angel's English Academy.

-We were impressed to see the way the children were playing with the intellectual games. On the next page are Rani's thought about the Little Angel's International kindergarten.



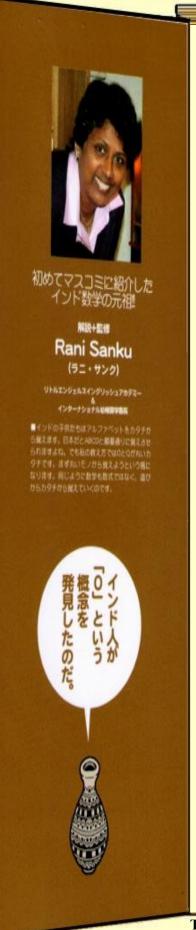
Little Angel's International Kindergarten



### Profile: Mrs. Rani Sanku

Born as the youngest of the four brothers and sisters on the 6th of October, 1957, Rani hails from the Southern part of India which has mass produced IT technologists. She has a Master's degree in Economics and Management. She has worked in a largest oil refinery in India as the youngest Female Manager. She was sent to the Indian Institute of Technology to do her Ph.D in financial management. That is where she met her husband and got married. Her husband got a fellowship from the Japanese Ministry of education, for doing research in technological field, and she and her husband came to Kyoto along with their one year old son.

Later, they shifted to Tokyo, she worked in the Embassy of India, taught English as a volunteer, and was the English teacher at Seikei Pimary School before founding the Little Angel's International Academy. Currently, she is the Principal of the Kindergarten



# **Rani's Little Angel's**

Learning English and Mathematics through games and geometric shapes.

*Is this the Indian way?* Children's IQ increases through teaching Indian mathematics and the way English is taught in the Academy, following Rani's teaching method.

Each class holds 10 to 12 students at most in each class, several small chairs are arranged around a big table which accommodates everyone. Puzzles and books used as teaching materials are stacked along the wall. The children of age 3 or so were busy arranging a complicated puzzle of pipes. All the children looked Japanese. We were informed that 95% of the students are of Japanese Nationality in this academy. While arranging the puzzle, the children were singing a song in English and they were talking with each other in English. So it was a pure English environment. The children clad in orange T-shirts were answering in English properly, to each of the questions asked by their teacher. We were really impressed to witness such a scene.

Very unique teaching materials are used for the program in the school. It is a way of learning while playing rather than acquiring life skills. For example, the children remember various colors while painting a drawing. Furthermore, we were surprised at the curriculum which teaches counting, alphabets, and name of the colors at the same session. *Teachers were also enjoying the game with the children*.

Rani - I believe that the children just like playing the game. The children are using all of their five senses as they look at the picture, touching it, and painting, because the children are happily enjoying doing it this way. This also develops their self-motivation. Rigidity in education is not useful. **Isn't it amazing to see that learning via use of games actually increases the children's IQ as well?** 

While watching these children we too felt that Indian mathematics is good for improving your IQ. Well, isn't that great? Next year, the Academy intends to start the elementary school with Grade "One". The present building has become small for the Academy, so there are plans to add a new building. The academy is sure to grow much bigger. We sincerely hope that the number of students, strong in English and Mathematics, increases along with the bigger place.

### School Data

Little Angel's English Academy, International Kindergarten 1-3-2, Kamirenjaku, Mitaka city, Tokyo, 181-0012 Telephone: 0422-52-8381 WebPage: http://www.AngelsEnglish.com



Teaching material used in the school are books from India.



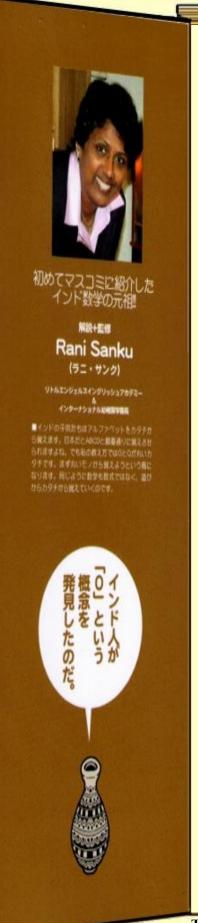
Whilst playing with the children, Ms Rani teaches them English and Mathematics.



Entrance of the Little Angel's International Academy.

International kindergarten course: Preschool for 2 and 3 year olds, Kindergarten for 4 and 5 year olds. For all grades: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 09:00 to 14:00; Wednesday from 09:00 to 12:00. Option of 3 days and 5 days course. (Next spring plans to start a primary school). Little Angels Academy: From the age of 2 to 12, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday from 15:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs

and on Saturday from 09:00 to 12:00. The main objective is to provide English education to the children until primary school end.



# What does Rani think about India?

We interviewed Ms. Rani, the editorial supervisor of the book, asking her several questions about the use of Indian mathematics.

### Q: How do you remember Indian style times tables of 19X19?

Rani: It is similar to Japan. We memorize it by just reciting them single-mindedly. However, in India, we start learning times tables much earlier than here in Japan by starting from the first grade. By the time we reach the third grade, we are capable of double digit multiplications using the times tables. Some children memorize times tables as far as 30X30.

### Q: Are all Indians good in mathematics?

Rani: Once again it is akin to Japan. Some kids excel in mathematics while others are not as good in it. However, mathematics is a part of play time since their childhood, so they have the mathematical environment around them. In that sense, on the whole, Indians may possess a higher level of mathematical ability.

# Q. These days use of computers has become widespread, and in the age where calculators are available on the mobile, do you think we need Indian style mathematics?

Rani: When compared to the time when the calculators were not available, today, there are far less situations where we need to use memorized times tables. However, Indian mathematics is not just for convenience, it is also useful as a brain stimulator. It is certainly useful in children's education, and is useful as brain training games for adults as well.

### Q: Is this form of Indian mathematics going to prevail?

Rani: When we think of the population, China stands at No.1 and India is No.2 in the world. But as China has a One-child policy, it is not going to take long for India to be the No.1 in population. If the overall population increases at such a rate and if we take into consideration the population involved with IT, Indian mathematics surely will spread similar to the manner in which Indian logical thinking has spread with the rise of IT.

### O: Why do you think Indian IT has spread so much?

Rani: It is said that India's educational system, which is strong in abstract thought, mathematics and science is the base for India's success in the IT field. At present, nearly 30% of IT Engineers in America's Silicon Valley are Indians. MSN Hotmail was developed by a 28 year old Indian. A close contact with American IT industry has helped in forming a strong IT base within India and IT industry is developing centered around Southern part of India as a domestic industry. India has more than 300 million youngsters who are under the age of 18. It is said that the young generation, with the advantage of English education and logical mathematical background, intend to work in IT industry, thereby becoming a high income class in India. Indians from the South are said to be strong in Mathematics. Indians in the North, especially around the capital city of India, are said to have good business sense.

### Q: Did the British rule in India have any impact on Indian mathematics?

Rani: Indian Mathematics was a part of Indian life long before the British rule commenced over India. (Refer to History of Indian Mathematics). So we can say that the British rule did not change anything as far as mathematics is concerned. However, the only advantage of British rule was that Indian mathematics could be known all over the world due to internationally common language medium of English .