

A Report on the 4th WSLO Congress

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【April 2: Precongress Courses】

Precongress courses were held on April 2 prior to the main congress. Ten courses had originally been scheduled but were reduced to five due to absence of some speakers from abroad in the aftermath of the Tohoku-Kanto earthquake. The following precongress courses were conducted in five conference rooms.

1. Problem List of Lingual Orthodontics (Dr. Hiro)
2. Lingual Straight Wire Technique (Drs. Fillion, Scuzzo and Takemoto)
3. Incognito (Drs. Lee, Sugiyama and Inami)
4. Skeletal Anchorage in Lingual Orthodontic Treatment (Drs. Hee-Moon Kyung and Ryoon-Ki Hong)
5. Interdisciplinary Approach in Lingual Treatment (Drs. Fukawa, Matsuno, Y. Nakanishi, Honda, Hatakeyama, Shimosuma, H. Nakanishi, and Furuya)

Unlike more formal lectures, these courses took place in a relaxed atmosphere throughout the day because of the closeness (both physical and psychological) shared between the lectures and participants.



Precongress Course (Dr. Hiro)

【April 3: First Day of Congress】

The precongress courses were attended by some, but not all, congress participants and thus provided few clues about the success of the congress itself, which was considered to depend largely on the turnout on the first day.

Dr. Furuya, Secretary General, called the congress to order at 8:30am, followed by a one-minute silent prayer to mourn the victims of the great earthquake. In the meantime, there was a gradual increase in the number of participants gathering for the opening ceremony. By the end of Prof. Matsumoto's (Osaka Dental University) greeting and Chairman Inami's opening address, the conference hall was nearly filled, bringing a sigh of relief to us all.

About the time Prof. Goto (Aichi Gakuin University) began his special lecture titled "Secure and Safe Orthodontic Treatment", there was no empty seat left and spare chairs were brought in for people standing along the walls.

All speakers including Japanese speakers spoke in English, which should not come as a surprise at an international meeting like this congress. Japanese audience was listening to English presentations by Japanese speakers through earphones for simultaneous interpretation, creating a special atmosphere coupled with the air of excitement in the packed conference room.

During the morning break after the special lectures by Prof. Goto of Japan and Prof. Park of South Korea, the participants were all relaxed and smiling as they were convinced of the success of the congress. In

the foyer outside the main hall, some were enjoying reunion with friends to keep each other updated. Some were exchanging opinions or asking questions. Others, probably from the Kanto region, were talking about the aftereffects of the earthquake.

In the afternoon of the first day, there were a fair number of videotaped presentations by overseas speakers who could not come to Japan, while some presentations were totally cancelled. The conference rooms were half full during videotaped presentations. However, these presentations contributed to time keeping by serving as a buffer for live presentations that went overtime.



Chairman Dr. Inami's opening address



Special lectures by Prof. Goto.

【Industry Exhibition and Buffet Lunch】

The industry exhibition took place in the room next to the foyer with the participation of 24 companies. They received many visitors, partly because the exhibition room was sandwiched between the foyer and buffet lunch room. The participants had to pass through the exhibition room to get to the lunch room during breaks. Almost all participants chose to eat the buffet lunch, which I found to be adequate in both quantity and contents. This was the first congress serving a buffet lunch that I have ever attended. In my previous experience, I had to go out to restaurants outside or on another floor. Thanks to this "self-contained" arrangement, nearly all participants stayed on the same floor the whole time visiting exhibitors and listening to presentations. Thus, the "heat" or "air of excitement" of the congress was well-retained without dissipating.

【Sessions for Staff Members】

Sessions for staff members were also held over two days, April 3 and 4, in the special conference room on the 12th floor. Presentations were made by dental hygienists, dentists and treatment coordinators who have been at the forefront of their respective fields. The presentations were categorized by theme and a total of 20 presentations were given on 6 themes: caries control, myofunctional therapy (MFT), tooth whitening, role of treatment coordinators, interdisciplinary approach and role of dental hygienists in lingual treatment.

Dr. Tabuchi, Lecturer at Aichi Gakuin University, and Associate Prof. Hayashi (Osaka University) gave educational lectures. There were many participants taking notes of the latest information on dental science presented by the two speakers. Although the sessions for staff members were targeted at dental hygienists, dental technicians, receptionists and dental assistants, many dentists also attended these sessions. During the educational and keynote lectures, all 200 seats in the conference room were occupied.

While presentations in the main hall were centered on treatment mechanics, techniques and case reports, those for staff members focused on practice management with actual examples from different offices. This gave the audience an excellent opportunity to recognize problems or areas of improvement in their own offices. Overall, the participants were avid listeners trying to absorb and take home all the information presented. The sessions also provided some young and apparently first-time speakers with a

chance to speak to a large audience. Staff members from the same offices were often present in the audience for moral support to the nervous speakers, further strengthening solidarity of the office team.



Sessions for Staff Members

【Charity Dinner】

A charity dinner for victims of the Great Tohoku-Kanto Earthquake was held in place of the originally scheduled Gala Dinner. The initially prepared 150 tickets were sold out and additional tickets were made available. Almost all participants from overseas were present. The dinner gave us a good opportunity to chat with famous speakers whom we would not have a chance to meet otherwise. Starting with the toast proposed by Dr. Kawamoto, a lively and exciting atmosphere was maintained throughout. One note of regret: A few participants, who may have forgotten that this was a charity dinner, partied a little too hard.



Charity Dinner

【April 4: Second Day of Congress】

The total number of participants was slightly smaller on the second day, which was Monday. However, educational lectures by the well-known Japanese speakers; Drs. Masaaki Honda, Masato Ikeda and Masato Iida, were well attended. Because the audience for these lectures was mostly Japanese, all three speakers spoke in Japanese.

Throughout the two-day congress, the audience continued to give warm and wholehearted applause to the few speakers from overseas. Although many overseas members could not come, this congress was still the largest lingual meeting in Japan where many famous speakers gathered. Attending the congress was a very stimulating experience and made me want to stand on the podium as a speaker someday. Most presentations were made in English. It was unfortunate that some of the well-organized presentations of well-treated cases could not be perceived as quality presentations due to a lack of the presenters' English-speaking ability. This left me with a renewed realization of the importance of English ability. I strongly feel that speakers' English proficiency is indispensable for an academic society to become truly global.



Educational lecture by Dr. Iida.

【Closing Ceremony】

The closing ceremony presided by Dr. Nakajima began with the announcement of new active members, followed by speeches from President-Elect of the WSLO (Dr. Scuzzo), Congress Chairman of the 5th WSLO (Dr. Leclerc) and President-Elect of the ESLO (Dr. Fillion). They extended their condolences to victims of the disaster, praise for the great success of this congress under difficult circumstances, appreciation to the executive committee and all people involved, invitation to the 5th WSLO Congress in Paris, and call for solidarity among the WSLO members in continued scientific pursuit for the future of lingual orthodontics. They also expressed their gratitude to the participants for attending the congress in this difficult situation, as well as their passion for lingual orthodontics, moving the hearts of the participants in the hall where the air of excitement from the congress still lingered.

It was the final remarks of Congress Chairman Dr. Inami that pulled everything together. He shared the difficulties he went through after the earthquake; requests from different circles to postpone or cancel the congress and countless hours spent with Dr. Takemoto weighing pros and cons of holding the congress. The ultimate deciding factor was his passion for lingual orthodontics and love for lingual orthodontists all over the world, he said thoughtfully. We were all moved by his hard work and commitment. A big cheer arose upon announcement that the number of participants totaled 787.

Dr. Inami closed his speech with "Thank you, Lingual!" He was greeted by a standing ovation as he walked off the stage. Having never experienced a standing ovation at dental or other meetings in or outside Japan, I learned for the first time what it was like. Everyone in the room spontaneously stood up and paid respect to Dr. Inami from the bottom of the heart. I felt that this thunderous applause best symbolized the great success of the congress.



Chairman Dr. Inami greeted by a standing ovation.