

Intercommunication through the Body

– Interviews regarding re-establishing the use of sighted guides –

MIZOTA Mayuka

Graduate School of Science for Human Services, Ritsumeikan University

Keywords: sighted guide, bodily contact, phenomenological approach

This study focuses on the re-establishment of the use of sighted guides. The use of such guides refers to when a sighted person walks with a person who is a visually impaired. This study also aims to shed light on whether this can be regarded as an effort in which the sighted person solely guides the visually impaired person. In addition, if the guide is not appropriate, this study examines how to characterize this type of situation.

Upon examination, this study aims to understand the bodily contact of a sighted guide in which the visually impaired person holds the arm of the sighted person. For the study, the author interviewed both visually impaired and sighted persons. Data was then analyzed using a phenomenological approach. The results indicate that: being a sighted guide is not a one-sided act, a sighted person guides the visually impaired person, and that this is an act that harmoniously occurs through the active communication of two people. From the above, being a sighted guide is an act that should be referred to as collaborative action. Both can sense various actions due to bodily contact, and this projects the reality of the scene as a collaborative action. It is thus necessary to explore how both walk together after recognizing these mutual sensations.