

Peer Social Interaction and Prosocial Behavior: Effects of Group-oriented Contingency on Students with Intellectual Disabilities and a Student with Autism

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This study examined the effects of a group-oriented contingency program in the promotion of peer social interactions. The programme included the following components: 1) pair units to reinforce, 2) structured chances to support, and 3) simplification of a group-oriented contingency system. Untrained pro-social behaviours were also analyzed. The subjects were two students with intellectual disabilities and one student with autism. A changing criterion design was used. Results indicated that all children increased their performance on peer interactions and their performance was maintained in a baseline probe. The children with intellectual disabilities displayed many prosocial

behaviours such as prompting, encouraging, and so on, however, no prosocial behaviour was observed in the child with autism. Some of this behaviour can be attributed to actual improvement in the autistic boy. These results suggest that a group-oriented contingency program is an effective and practical intervention for all subjects. The issue of maintenance is also discussed in terms of peer reinforcement, which was alternated with reinforcement by the teacher.

Key Words: Group-oriented contingency, peer interactions, prosocial behaviour, student with intellectual disabilities, student with autism.

The Role of “Tsukyu” in Educational Counselling of Children with Special Needs

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In recent years there has been an increasing emphasis on educational counseling at the earlier stages in special education. This paper considers the role of “Tsukyu” (i.e. resource rooms) at elementary schools in educational counseling for preschool children with special needs and their parents.

Two surveys were conducted to determine how the Tsukyu functions as a place of educational counseling for young children and their parents, and what parents want from the Tsukyu. It was found that more than 60% of the Tsukyu surveyed offer educational counseling to preschool children. It was also found that counseling is beneficial, not only for children and parents, but for teachers as well because teachers sometimes have difficulties due to lack of time and experience.

The survey findings indicate that parents want the Tsukyu to provide information and guidance that meet their child’s needs and for the Tsukyu to be a place where they can interact with other parents. Furthermore, they want to consult with teachers at the Tsukyu about the problems they have in everyday life.

It was found that Tsukyu have begun to play the role of an educational counseling centre for preschool children and it is expected they will become an important part of the early intervention system in Japan.

Key Words: educational counseling, Tsukyu, preschool children, early intervention system, childcare support

An Evaluation of an Effective Presentation Method Implemented in Multimedia Applications Designed to Help Special Education Teachers Select Useable Software Programs

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Selecting useable software programs is a time-consuming task for special education teachers. Many use "trial and error" until they find a program most suitable for the needs of the children they teach. Munekata et al. (1998) developed and evaluated an HTML (Hypertext Mark-up Language) based multimedia-teaching module introducing 74 educational software programs to teachers. The module contains movies and text information. The above-mentioned study, however, did

not examine the effects of method of presentation. The purpose of present study, therefore, was to discover a better presentation method for making multimedia applications designed to help special education teachers select useable software programs. Differences between two presentation methods were investigated. The subjects were 22 special education teachers with good computer literacy. Each teacher was asked to score two software programs under two conditions; 1) "text +

movie + caption", and 2)"text + still image." It was found that net scoring time in the latter condition was shorter than the former condition ($t=2.58$, $.01 < p < .05$), and there were no significant differences between both conditions on scores. In terms of time efficiency, findings indicate that "text + still image" exceeded "text + movie + caption." However, it must be emphasized that these findings are restricted to limited conditions. In this study, for example, the researcher prepared easy-to-evaluate software programs and the subjects were all computer literate school teachers, and so on. In the field of special education, however, most software programs are simple and the computer skills of teachers have been

improving. The results of present study, consequently, will be of importance in increasing the use of computers in special education. Implications for further study are as follows:

(1) Why net scoring time of "text + still image" was significantly shorter than that of "text + movie + captions"?

(2) Is it appropriate to use "text + still image" for evaluating more complex software programs?

(3) Is "text + movie + captions" still ineffective for novice (in computer use) teachers?

Key Words: Multimedia, presentation methods, evaluation study, DHTML, SAMI, Special Education

Issues Concerning the Protection of Personal Information and Use of Information in Special Education: An Evaluation of "Bulletins" of Special Education Centres Managed by Local Government

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This study examines problems related to the protection of personal information and its use in special education. The researchers investigated the research bulletins of three prefectural special education centres from the perspective of the protection of personal information. The findings are as follows:

1. The amount of descriptive material related to personal information in all three centres decreased following the enactment of protection ordinances relating to personal information.
2. The bulletin of one of the three centres did contain personal information even after the enactment of protection ordinances relating to personal information.

3. The terminology used in the articles relating to special education in the bulletin of one of the centres changed following further consideration of the protection of personal information after the enactment of protection ordinances relating to personal information.

The results are discussed from the perspective of the protection of personal information and the dissemination of useful information in special education.

Key Words: Protection of personal information, use of information, dissemination of information, prefectural special education centres, bulletins of prefectural special education centres, protection ordinances of personal information

Communication Methods of Children with Deaf-blindness: Classification and Systematization

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Deafblind children are a diverse population due to the combination of differences in the degree of visual and auditory impairment, the onset of impairment, the presence or absence of other disability and educational history. The communication methods used by this population are diverse as well. Selection of communication method(s) appropriate for individual children is one of the biggest issues faced by parents, teachers, speech therapists and other related personnel in raising or supporting a deafblind child. The selection should be well-grounded on the current capacity and needs of the child with a good perspective of future

transition in communication methods in accordance with the child's development.

In this paper, a framework developed from the theory of Hachizo Umezu (1978) and the author's work with deafblind children is presented to classify and systematize the many communication methods used by deafblind children. Classification is made from six different aspects and systematization is done on the basis of the genesis of sign system to point out the continuity in progression from one communication method to the next.

Key Words: Deafblindness, communication method, multiple disability, continuity, development

Review on the Self-Assessment of Hearing (Listening) for Hearing Impairment

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Self-assessment of hearing (listening) for hearing impairment is divided into self-assessment of hearing (listening) required for the fitting of hearing aids, and for analysis of handicap. The first self-assessment of hearing (listening) is based on the impression of hearing (listening) of the sounds amplified by the hearing aid and the satisfaction on its usage. The content of this assessment consists of three aspects:

1. Assessment of hearing (listening) in various environments (e.g., noisy-noiseless, face-to-face communication, group communication).
2. Understanding by persons involved with hearing impairment persons of the use of hearing aids by hearing aid users.
3. The psychology of hearing aid users.

On the other hand, the self-assessment of hearing (listening) for analysis of handicaps investigates the inconvenience and handicap arising from difficulty

experienced in hearing (listening). This assessment also consists of three aspects:

1. Behavior through hearing (listening).
2. The feeling of inconvenience through hearing (listening).
3. Awareness of handicap through hearing (listening).

However, most self-assessments have been designed for adults, especially senior adults with hearing impairment, and there has been little self-assessment for children with hearing impairment. In developing self-assessment of hearing (listening) for children with hearing impairment consideration should be given to the child's school life and the results should be relevant to understanding of their hearing aid and communication.

Key Words: Persons with hearing impairment, hearing (listening), self-assessment, hearing aid, handicap

Some Problematic Issues Concerning Relationship-theory' for the Studies of Communication Disorders

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The purpose of the present review is to provide an overview of research in Japan on communication disorders based on "Relationship-theory" and to examine problems that confront researchers in this field. The research was classified into two types: 1) research on the relationship between a child and teacher/mother, and 2) research on the relationship between the child and objects in his/her immediate environment. Four significant issues emerged from this meta-analysis:

1. Construction of a methodology to improve communication disorders between the child and teacher.
2. Clarification of the concept of "Relationship" in research on communication disorders.

3. Consideration of the methodology of relationship investigation.
4. Consideration of a correlation of the concept of "relationship" with reliability.

In order to approach these problems, the following three strategies were proposed:

1. The utilization of discourse data of a child.
2. Observation of the relationship between the child and a teacher by a third person.
3. Description of the state of the child's speech and language.

Key Words: Communication disorders, communicative relationship, Relationship-theory, language acquisition

The Present Situation of Education for Children with Autism in Regular Classes

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In education for children with autism in Japan, individualized teaching has been thought to be important in special classes and the Tsukyu system for children with emotionally disturbance. While many children

spend much time in regular classes, the actual conditions of their learning environment is unclear. In addition, the nature of educational support required has not investigated. Therefore, questionnaires were distributed

to teachers of regular classes of elementary schools asking about the education of children with autism and the needs of their teachers. 54 responses were received. It was found that teachers have difficulty with the behaviour of these children as well as their ability to study, and that they want some assistance from an someone who can support the child individually. Further, it was found that as they have poor skills for daily life and communication, teachers ask normal children in the class for help. To cope with this reality it is suggested that a support system be established in the school and

that a teacher's manual for supporting children with autism be written. Furthermore, investigation of whether or not the curriculum in Tsukyu and special classes is useful in regular classes should be undertaken. The results also showed the importance of establishing a close relation among teachers of regular, special and Tsukyu classes for considering the validity of the purpose and the curriculum for these children.

Key Words: Autism, transactional programs, regular classes, needs of teachers, educational support

A Study of Educational Support for Children with Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Similar Conditions

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In recent years there has been increasing emphasis on the educational support for children with Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and similar conditions in regular classes. The purpose of this study was to survey the educational support for those children with special educational needs in resource rooms designed for children with emotional disturbance. All 175 schools with this type of resource room in Japan were asked to participate in the survey and resource room teachers at these schools were asked to complete a questionnaire. The findings were as follows. Of a total of 335 subjects considered in the present study, 202 were diagnosed by resource room teachers as having ADHD, a further 120 as possible ADHD, and the remainder unknown. 16.8% of children diagnosed as ADHD were in elementary school resource rooms and 4.7% were in resource room located in secondary schools. These reported percentages were approximately twice those of a comparable 1997 survey (8.7% in elementary schools and 2.1% in secondary schools). 90% of subjects were male, and 20% of those clinically diagnosed as ADHD had co-morbid diagnosis and 33% had a learning disorder. 34% of children with ADHD and similar

conditions were on medication, 59% of this group being on methylphenidate (Ritalin). Symptoms listed on DSM-IV criteria for ADHD were ranked into four degrees and individual children were ranked by teachers using this checklist into three symptom categories: 1) Attention-deficit, 2) Hyperactivity, and 3) Impulsivity. It was found that the prevalence of hyperactivity was higher than the other two categories, and that the prevalence of hyperactivity and impulsivity decreased with age. The curriculum for children with ADHD and similar conditions was also addressed in the questionnaire. It was found that greater emphasis was placed on "Educational therapeutic activities" than academic subjects. Many of these activities were related to the development of well-balanced emotions and smooth interpersonal relationships. In addition, results from the free description segment of the questionnaire revealed the variety of individualized teaching of children with ADHD and similar conditions taking place in resource rooms for children with emotional disturbance.

Key Words: Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD), resource room, questionnaire, educational support, curriculum

Trends In the Use of Computers and the Internet in Special Schools in Japan

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The purpose of this study was to determine trends in the use of computers and the Internet in special schools in Japan. The researchers reviewed six research papers, two official survey reports, and a brief report on educational use of computers and the Internet published

in 2000. This was a simple summary paper, and our discussions and conclusions in the present study were mainly based on comprehensive results and unpublished data of the survey in March 1999. Findings in this report were based on questionnaires distributed to 983 special

schools (viz. 71 schools for the blind, 107 schools for the deaf, 514 schools for the intellectually disabled, 195 schools for the physically disabled, and 96 schools for the health impaired. 797 schools or 81.1% of all special schools responded to the questionnaire. It was found that the number of schools with computers has been increasing (i.e. from 96.9% in 1997 to 98.1% in 1999). In 1999 the mean number of computers in a school increased to 12.2 from ?. Further major findings from the 1999 survey were as follows: 87 schools have experience of CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction), mainly in academic subjects (viz. Japanese, arithmetic / mathematics and so on), 39 % of schools are connected to the Internet and use it mainly for teaching and learning, and 58 % of connected schools have a Homepage or Web pages mainly providing profile

information such as school history, address and so on. On the one hand, while the number of teachers who considered themselves equipped to make original software programs decreased by 2 %, on the other hand, computer literacy among teachers increased accounting for almost one half of all special school teachers. Despite the above findings, many schools had problems due to the rapidity of the spread of computer technology. These difficulties included lack of budget for necessary software and hardware, and an increase in the management load of personnel responsible for school use of the Internet.

Key Words: Computer, Internet, teaching method, research survey, Special Education

The New Information Network and Computer System of the National Institute of Special Education: Current Status and Problems

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A new computer system and LAN were introduced at the National Institute of Special education (NISE) in December 1999. The updated system was designed to achieve an easy-to-use information environment for the user. To determine the effectiveness of the new system, the number of e-mails and the number of hits of the NISE homepage were examined. In addition, the frequency of e-mails on a specific day of the week as well as time slot during the day were tabulated. It was

found that the use of e-mail had increased fourfold since the introduction of the new system and that the NISE home page was accessed approximately 4000 times on any day of the week. Moreover, this paper discusses management implications for the computer system and LAN of design changes introduced since December 1999 as well as functions that were not incorporated into the new system.

On the Construction of a Database Based on XML at the National Institute of Special Education

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The National Institute of Special Education (NISE) has made a Web page, which presents various information related to special education. Until now, the Web page has been written generally in the language called HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language). In this case, the Web page had to be modified by hand. However, the situation will be quite different with the introduction of XML (Extensible Markup Language), which is attracting growing attention as the base technology to support Web pages into the next generation. If XML is used as the language to write Web pages, it's

modification will be done automatically in connection with the renewal of the database. Web pages scripted in XML will be able to be easily linked with a database, then the system in which the Web page always refers to, cooperate and is updated with a database can be built effectively by using XML. In this paper, the advantage of introducing XML to NISE for the construction of a new database-affinitive Web page system.

Key Words: Digital document, database, WWW, XML, PDF

Current Special Education in Britain: Deaf-blind Education and Staff Development

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This article provides an overview of the current state of educational reform as it affects special needs education in the United Kingdom and focuses on the uniqueness of deafblind/multisensory impairment education. The central government in the UK introduced the market principle to schools with the aim of improving educational outcomes. Recent policy has focused on curricular reform of academic subjects. In the field of the education of children with special needs, there has seen dramatic changes in educational policy and practice since the concept of “Special Educational Needs (SEN)” was introduced in the 1981 Education Act. This relatively new concept stressed that the content of services provided should be directly based on the child’s special educational needs. On the one hand while many students with SEN were able to access mainstream schooling, on the other they faced new difficulties in their learning environment, especially those children with severe learning difficulties and/or complex needs. This paper suggests that at present there are insufficient resources in mainstream schools in Britain to provide for children who have specific and complex needs. Recently there has been debate on the uniqueness of the condition known as deafblindness as part of the current debate on the education of children with complex needs. The outcome of this debate is that the importance of professional educational treatment has been recognized

once again. This finding was based on a government report that showed that many staff who work with pupils who are deafblind use specific and wide-ranging strategies and that they should have a thorough understanding and knowledge of the condition. The central government has established guidelines for meeting these standards of expertise and information about the uniqueness of deafblindness. However, many staff still have concerns that the needs of children with deafblindness or multisensory impairments will become lost in mainstream settings. Most teachers in regular classes do not have expertise in this field, so the issue of staff development has become increasingly important. This overview of recent educational trends, including the provision of deafblind education in Britain suggest that more professional expertise in more inclusive educational settings is required, the importance of individual needs as a catalyst for educational intervention, and for a greater emphasis on a multi/interdisciplinary approach. In Japan, it is suggested that the uniqueness of education for children who are deafblind should be stressed and that expertise should be developed through a system of inservice training of teachers.

Key Words: Deafblind, multi-sensory impaired, special educational needs, special education in Britain, expertise

Literacy in Japanese Deaf Education: hanging Concepts and Methods

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The development of Literacy in deaf children has always been a major objective of the education of the deaf. However, since the education of the deaf began, the concept and methodology of educational intervention for deaf children's literacy has changed the teaching of literacy instruction by the manual method has shifted towards a highly designed letter-based teaching methodology using the pure oral method.

Following this various modalities of Japanese code for developing children's literacy have been used. The current shift in emphasis, however, is to bilingual approach for literacy development. And also new changes are happening in a global context of rapid development of information technology that may have an influence on the concept of literacy itself. In this paper a functional framework of intervention for deaf children's literacy is proposed.