

NOTE

History of and perspective on education for children with speech and speech-language disorders in Japan

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Abstract: Education for children with speech and language disorders in Japan began in the form of remedial education for children with learning difficulties in reading and the correction of dialects in the speech-language arts class in the postwar period. The influence of the introduction of speech pathology from the US improved this type of education. It has become specialized to cater to the educational needs of children with speech-language disorders, and the content and methods of such education have been established. This kind of training originally began ‘after-hours,’ that is, after the school day finished. Subsequently, part-time special classes under the special class system were soon adopted, and at present, it is based on “*tsukyu sidou*,” which is a system of “resource-room training” that has been practiced for more than 30 years. Education for children with speech-language disorders in Japan has accumulated a history of research and movement in aspects of both the “development of content and methods” and the “development of the system.” Recently, the issues of such education related to the development of the system of resource-room training and the certification of speech therapists have been highlighted. In this paper, following the history of this education, we discuss management issues and the specialization of education and teachers in relation to current trends of society and education.

Key Words: Education for children with speech-language disorders, *Tsukyu sidou* (resource-room training), Speech-language training class, Speech therapy class

I. Introduction

Education for children with speech-language disorders⁽¹⁾ in Japan began as remedial education for children with learning difficulties in reading⁽²⁾ and the correction of dialects³ in the speech-language training class or speech-language therapy class in the postwar period. The influence of the introduction of speech pathology from the US improved this type of education. It has become specialized to cater to the educational needs of children with speech-language disorders, and the content and methods of such education have been established. This kind of training originally began ‘after-hours,’ that is, after the school day had finished. Subsequently, part-time special classes⁽⁴⁾ under the special class system was soon adopted, and at present it is based on “*tsukyu sidou*,” which is a system of “resource-room training” that has been practiced for more than 30 years.

Education for children with speech-language disorders in Japan has accumulated a history of research and movement in aspects of both the “development of content and methods” and the “development of the system.”

Recently, the issues of such education related to the development of a system of resource-room training and the certification of speech therapists⁽⁵⁾ have been highlighted.

- (1) What kinds of children are the students in the “speech-language training class^{(6)?}”
- (2) What are the content and the methods of education for children with speech-language disorders?
- (3) What qualifications are required for the teachers involved in the education of children with speech-language disorders^{(7)?}

These questions can be categorized into issues concerning the role of the “speech-language training class” (management issues), the content and methods of education for children with speech-language disorders (specialization of education), and the qualifications of the teachers (expertise of teachers).

In this paper, the various issues mentioned are discussed after the history of this type of education in relation to the current status of society and education.

II. History of Education of Children with Speech-language Disorders

The education of children with speech-language disorders in Japan germinated from the practical work of Rakuseki-sya established by Shuji Izawa in the Meiji era (1868-1912). Rakuseki-sya developed mainly around training to remedy stuttering, and divisions, branch offices, and local offices were established during the Taisho era (1912-1926). Rakuseki-sya accomplished achievements as a private business in the Meiji and Taisho eras.

In school, classes for children who stuttered were established in elementary schools of Tokyo City in the Taisho era. Records indicate that such classes were established in the Yanagawa Elementary School in Fukagawa Ward and two schools in Shiba and Kanda in 1926. However, these practices were terminated by the onset of the Pacific War.

The current education of children with speech-language disorders is based on the educational theory of Kenji Hamasaki, adopted at the Sendai City Toricho Elementary School in Miyagi Prefecture, and that of Kiyomatsu Okuma, adopted at Ichikawa City Mama Elementary School in Chiba Prefecture with the start of the new education postwar.

1. Beginning as remedial education

Kenji Hamasaki began efforts in the education of children with speech-language disorders after his research on “correction of Tohoku accents using Roman letters” and “training adapted to individual differences,” and he established the “speech-language training class” for children with speech-language disorders in his school in 1953. This class was mainly held as an extracurricular activity after the end of the school day.

Kiyomatsu Okuma began efforts in remedial training of Japanese reading after his research on “group training catering to ability and individual differences,” and he established a “Japanese remedial class” based on the resource-room system in 1953.

On the basis of this work, special classes for children with speech-language disorders were established in the Sendai City Toricho Elementary School in 1958 and in the Chiba City Innai Elementary School in 1959. Thus, the education of children with speech-language disorders began in public education in both name and reality.

(1) Work of Kenji Hamasaki

The training pioneered by Kenji Hamasaki was called the Sendai method or Toricho method, and it had the following

features.

- ① The method is structured on the basis of research on Japanese phonetics.
- ② Detailed step-by-step teaching of articulation is prepared.
- ③ Sufficient pathological research is conducted for each type of speech-language disorder.
- ④ Teachers are in close contact and coordination with medical institutions.
- ⑤ The training method is constructed with emphasis on functional training.
- ⑥ A solid record is prepared, training record sheets, photographs, and audio and video recordings.

Hamasaki categorized the training of children as speech and speech-language therapy.⁽⁸⁾ He indicated the necessity of avoiding games or hearing exercises in which the intention of the teacher was unclear, and that the appropriate and necessary training should be carried out step by step, that the reason for the training should be clear, and that the results of training should be evaluated objectively.

Hamasaki contended that speech-language disorders are remediable and called the class for remedying such disorders a “speech-language training class.” He also held to the principle of disclosing the therapy to the parents. Furthermore, his remedial training for speech-language disorders was not only conducted as individual training but also often conducted in small groups with the intention of not only pursuing training efficiency but also nurturing the children’s sociability, cooperativeness, and communication skills (Hamasaki, 1988).¹

(2) Work of Kiyomatsu Okuma

The work of Kiyomatsu Okuma was based on the research and practice of remedial training for children having difficulty in reading. Subsequently, it progressed to the “training of speaking” on the idea that the basis of reading is in hearing and speaking.

Because the children who received remedial speech training had disabilities such as articulation disorders, stuttering, developmental delay of language, and mutism, Okuma proposed that an organization in charge of the planning and implementation of remedial training be established (cooperation with medical institutions and the management of the class and school).

Moreover, Okuma focused on the relationship between speech-language disorders and poor learning performance and paid attention to understanding the actual condition of the children, including poor learning performance, and determining the criteria for admittance into the special class.

In the actual training, he took care of psychological aspects and communication by creating a pleasant atmosphere, promoting willingness to speak, stabilizing the emotional conditions of children, giving them confidence, and helping them make friends. The training materials were also well designed by taking into consideration the interests and concerns of children, as well as incorporating games in the training (Okuma & Yamagishi, 1997)⁷.

(3) Development as remedial education

The practice of the remedial class⁽⁹⁾ for children with difficulties in language and delay in learning Japanese was carried out throughout the country. The “Japanese Association of Remedial Education” was established, and the research and practice of remedial education were expanded to include arithmetic. (Later, the Study Group of Speech and Language Disorders became independent of the Japanese Association of Remedial Education and developed into the present “Japanese Association of Education for Children with Speech and Language Disorders.”) According to the list of remedial classes established across the country created by the Japanese Association of Remedial Education in 1954, remedial classes (the subjects of which were Japanese, arithmetic, and speech-language disorders) were established in 19 elementary schools in the country. The Mama Elementary School where Okuma carried out his training and the Toricho Elementary School where Hamasaki conducted his training are on the list. The practices of Okuma and Hamasaki started as remedial education and then became the foundations of the development of education for children with speech-language disorders.

2. Development of special class for children with speech-language disorders

The establishment of special classes for children with speech-language disorders in Sendai City Toricho Elementary School in 1958 and in Chiba City Innai Elementary School in 1959 led to the development of such special classes as the setting of remedial education for children with speech-language disorders.

(1) Expansion of special classes for speech-language disorders

On the basis of the activities of the parents’ associations in Toricho Elementary School in Sendai City and Innai Elementary School in Chiba City, the “National Council of the Association of Parents of Children with Speech and Speech-language Disorders” was established in 1964, and a nationwide movement to establish special classes for children with speech-language disorders and the fostering and certification system of teachers began.

The “NHK Special Speech-language Training Class (Sendai Broadcasting Station)” and “NHK Remedial Speech-language Class (nationwide network),” which were based on the practices of Hamasaki and Okuma, were also aired to serve an illuminating role. Moreover, the teaching curriculum for education of children with speech-language disorders was established in teacher-training colleges across the country. Such developments led to the rapid nationwide establishment of special classes for children with speech-language disorders as sites of therapy for such children.

(2) Training system in special class for children with speech-language disorders

Considering the system of special classes for children with speech-language disorders, it is necessary for the children in the special class to stay and to be trained mainly in that class. However, from the beginning of the adoption of the special class, *tuukyu* system, which is a resource-room system in which most of the training concerning academic subjects and fields is given in regular classes and the special training concerning speech-language disorders is given in the special class, has been adopted for the following reasons.

In Toricho Elementary School, in the first year of the special class, academic subjects were taught to a combined class consisting of three children in the third grade and four children in the fourth grade. The speech and language therapy was conducted in a class including children from other elementary schools after school hours. It was pointed out that the system was burdensome for the teacher of the class and children, as well as being inefficient. The “resource-room method” (called the “*tsukyu* method” by Hamasaki) was adopted in the following year, 1959 (Hamasaki, 1988)¹.

In Mama Elementary School, the resource-room system (called the *tsukyu* system in Mama Elementary School) was adopted from the beginning of the “speech-language therapy class.” The general reasons were as follows. ① It was proved that the target children could derive educational benefits from training for one to four hours per week. ② Because the number of target children was large, the content of the training must be narrowed in order for one teacher to take charge. ③ The system was modeled after that in the US. ④ It was necessary to clarify the difference between the speech-language therapy class and the fixed special classes, most of which targeted mentally retarded children (Okuma & Yamagishi, 1997)⁷.

The special class for children with speech-language disorders was established as a fixed class in the institutional framework; however, the training was actually conducted

by the resource-room method until “resource-room training” was legislated in 1993.

Various problems arose, such as those related to school registration and the curriculum, because of the gap between the system and the actual training method.

(3) Institutional characteristics of special class system for children with speech-language disorders and its practice

Problems in school registration and curriculum

While most of the training was conducted in regular classes, the children had to be treated as belonging to the special class for speech-language disorders in the official records such as the attendance book, school registration (curriculum guidance records), and health examination reports. As for class enrollment, because it was necessary that children who were enrolled and trained in a regular class be transferred to the special class for speech-language disorders, parental consent was required. In practice, sometimes the enrollment was not changed and the special training was given as part of educational counseling. In either case, there was a problem with the positioning of the training of children within the educational curriculum.

Flexible operation of system

While there were various problems in the practice under the special class system for children with speech-language disorders, it was also pointed out that the system had some beneficial characteristics.

The advantage was that a relatively flexible management of the special class for children with speech-language disorders was allowed. On the basis of the approval to establish the class and obtaining a training space (classrooms) and teachers, training and support were given to children other than those enrolled in the special class. In a relatively relaxed management environment, the special class functioned as an educational resource that could respond to the numerous needs of various children.

The ages of the children who received the training and support also varied. There were reports that training and support were given to infants, high-school students, and adults in some cases. Another advantage pointed out was that support, adapted to the individual needs of the children, was provided regardless of the status of the class in which they were enrolled; for example, speech-language training could be given to children who were enrolled in the special class for mental retardation.

3. Training in special class for children with speech-language disorders

The special class for children with speech-language disorders, which was called the “speech-language training class” in Toricho Elementary School in Sendai City and the “speech-language therapy class” in Innai Elementary School in Chiba City, was developed as the space for setting remedial education for children with speech-language disorders.

Behind the names chosen for the special class for children with speech-language disorders, namely, “speech-language training class” and “speech-language therapy class,” there seemed to be an intent to show that the special class for children with speech-language disorders was different from the special classes for children with other disorders and that the setting of remedial speech-language training was in the resource-room system (resource-room method).

While the special class for children with speech-language disorders was established as the setting of speech-language therapy, the target, content, methods, and views on training were developed differently within practices in individual areas.

(1) Change in target children

After the special classes for children with speech-language disorders were begun in Toricho Elementary School in Sendai City in 1958 and in Innai Elementary School in Chiba City in 1959, such classes became established across the country.

The number of classes increased rapidly in the late 1970s and in the early 1980s (Table 1). Changes in the status of the disorders of the target children were also observed (Table 2).

TABLE 1 Change in number of established special class for children with speech-language disorders and in number of children enrolled

Fiscal year	Number of class (n)	Number of children (n)
1965	17	163
1970	277	2,075
1975	847	5,590
1980	1,198	7,177
1985	1,416	7,658
1990	1,429	6,614

Total number in elementary and junior high schools surveyed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

TABLE 2 Change in status of disorders of target children

	1973	1979	1985	1991
Articulation disorder (%)	27.4	25.4	31.7	36.1
Cleft palate (%)	11.2	7.1	4.9	3.5
Stuttering (%)	22.9	13.8	10.8	8.3
Hearing impairment (%)	17.7	16.9	15.8	13.4
Language development (%)	20.8	32.6	33.4	30.4
Others (%)		4.2	3.4	8.3

National survey on actual condition of special classes for children with hearing impairment and speech-language disorders (National Institute of Special Education)

In actual status, the proportion of children with disorders classified as language delay rapidly increased during the period between the survey in 1973 and 1979. (The classification “language delay” was treated as the general term for children showing a delay in language development. In the survey in 1985, this term was further divided into “main problem in language,” “main problem in emotion,” and “main problem in intellectual faculties” on the basis of the characteristics of the delay. In the survey in 1991, language delay was replaced by the term “delayed language development” to emphasize that this term was not a diagnostic term. The term “others” has been used since 1979. As for the condition of the children classified under this term, autism, mutism, delayed mental development, cerebral paralysis, learning disorders, and children returning from abroad were listed in the survey in 1991. While the classification term “language delay” has changed to the terms “delayed language development” and “others,” the number of children classified into these terms has increased, suggesting that the conditions of the children have diversified.)

These changes caused the training in the special class for children with speech-language disorders to shift from the conventional concept of remedial education (Kawashita, 1987)². Along with this shift, the special class for children with speech-language disorders, once called “speech-language therapy class,” has gradually come to be called “speech-language training class” in many cases.

(2) Change in concept of education observed at national convention

From the list of national conventions held by the National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders⁽¹⁰⁾ every year, we can see that “issues of system and management” was the theme from the 1st Convention (Tokyo 1972) to the 11th Convention (Fukushima 1982). This indicates that the issues in the system and management were of concern at that time (Table 3).

TABLE 3 Titles of 1st–11th national conventions

Year, Host prefecture, Title of convention
1972, 1st, Tokyo Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school
1973, 2nd, Kanagawa Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Immediate issues and measures for them
1974, 3rd, Fukuoka Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Immediate issues and measures for them
1975, 4th, Niigata Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Pursuing effective training
1976, 5th, Hyogo Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Aiming at consistent training from early childhood
1977, 6th, Tokyo Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Aiming at enhancing consistent training from early childhood
1978, 7th, Yamaguchi Desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing the role and the position of the classroom (class)
1979, 8th, Iwate Desirable classes for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in public school: Looking at the coming ten years on the basis of the current situation
1980, 9th, Miyazaki More desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Aiming at specific management and training in the future on the basis of current situation
1981, 10th, Saitama More desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing early detection of disorders and enrichment of consistent training system
1982, 11th, Fukushima More desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing class management and training responding to actual status on the basis of the current situation

After the 12th Convention (1983), the themes started to vary, such as “rich in mind and language,” “rich in humanity,” and “looking for education with a new viewpoint.”

At the 12th Convention (Aichi 1983), Osamu Miyawaki (the principal of Naka-Daiichi Elementary School in Kakamigahara City in Gifu Prefecture at that time), in his panel discussion entitled “Considering the desirable future education of children with hearing and speech-language disorders from a broad viewpoint-the standpoint of school management-,” referred to the language relation diagram suggested by Johnson. Focusing on the y and z axes, he indicated that speech-language disorders were problems in the society surrounding the children rather than problems of the children themselves, and that educators should pay attention to this background. For this reason, he pointed out the significance of school and class management (Miyawaki, 1983)⁶.

At the 17th convention (Miyagi 1988), Kazuaki Kawashita (a teacher at Higashi-nibancho Elementary School in Sendai City and the head of the Research Division of the Miyagi Association of Hearing and Speech-language Disorders at that time) commented on the subtitle “looking for education with a new viewpoint” following the title of the convention, saying, “The training methods are highly diversified depending on the characteristics, process, and degree of language problems, and the acceptance of this diversity is the significance of the existence of the ‘language training class.’ However, through its 30-year history, the training methods have become fixed as if they were established depending on the type of disorder. Namely, the training procedure is predefined and it is applied to every child. -snip- Two major problems seem to relate to such training. One is that the speech-language training class and the teachers lose touch with the children’s actual school life and learning activities, which reduces the meaning of the speech-language training classes in schools. Essentially, the training in a speech-language training class must be organized flexibly in accordance with the problems or characteristics of the children. However, it seems that the more specialized the training becomes, the less flexible it becomes in terms of its adaptability to the real status of the children” (Kawashita, 1988)³.

While the conventional education for speech-language disorders aimed at alleviating the specific disorder of the child (x axis), Miyawaki showed the necessity of focusing on the surroundings of the children.

From the new viewpoint of education for children with speech-language disorders, Kawashita shifted the basic concept from the conventional one of remedial education to the consideration of the child’s overall school life. He also tried to confirm the significance of the existence of “speech-language training class” in schools. He is determined to review the concept of remedial education which has been

TABLE 4 Titles of 12th–22nd national conventions

Year, Host prefecture, Title of convention
1983, 12th, Aichi Pursuing desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in the future: Aiming at the development of students rich in mind and language
1984, 13th, Aomori Pursuing a concept of education for children with hearing, speech-language, and emotional disorders in the future: Concept of class management and training for nurturing the mind and language
1985, 14th, Tokyo Pursuing desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in the future: Training with the aim of nurturing rich humanity
1986, 15th, Ibaraki Pursuing a concept of education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in the future: Training with the aim of nurturing rich humanity
1987, 16th, Nagano Desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in the future: Pursuing a concept of training and class management aimed at nurturing rich humanity
1988, 17th, Miyagi More desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing training with new viewpoints
1989, 18th, Tokyo More desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing class management and training with a new viewpoint
1990, 19th, Akita Future direction of education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Ideal class management and training responding to requests from children
1991, 20th, Ehime Promotion of education facing and nurturing each individual child: Effective training method responding to disorders of each child
1992, 21st, Okayama More desirable education for children with hearing, speech-language, and emotional disorders: Aiming at nurturing communication ability
1993, 22nd, Hokkaido Ideal training on the basis of educational diagnoses of children with speech-language disorders

continuously sustained in the education of children with speech-language disorders and to look for new viewpoints.

After the 12th convention (Aichi 1983), the subjects

were “rich in mind,” “mind and language” and “rich in humanity,” which indicate a continuous focus on mind and humanity. The subject was “training with new viewpoints” at the 17th convention (Miyagi 1988) and “class management and training with new viewpoints” at the 18th convention (Tokyo 1989), reflecting the continuous promotion of the transformation of education for children with speech-language disorders. Moreover, the viewpoint of understanding speech-language disorders as a problem of communication was suggested at the 21st convention (Okayama 1992) (Table 4).

Behind these changes was the growing understanding of disorders promoted by the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 and the publication of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps (ICIDH) by WHO in 1980.

With the comprehensive idea of dividing disorders into three levels, namely, impairments, disabilities, and handicaps, as shown by ICIDH, speech-language disorders were also perceived from a new perspective. While conventional speech and language therapy was mainly based on the idea of understanding speech-language disorders as impairments and disabilities, when speech-language disorders were understood from the aspect of handicaps, the viewpoint arose of approaching them as problems in communication using language and in communication of relationships. This viewpoint became the basis of the subsequent transformation of the training concept.

4. Establishing “resource-room training”

Since the establishment of the special classes for children with speech-language disorders in Toricho Elementary School in Sendai City in 1958 and in Innai Elementary School in Chiba City in 1959, it has taken more than 35 years for training under the resource-room system to be legislated as an educational system.

While the education of children with speech-language disorders has been developed under the system of special classes and has long been practiced in the form of training under the resource-room method (resource-room system), the realization of a system corresponding to the actual status of training has been required from the beginning of such education. Various efforts and approaches were constantly made by related organizations such as the National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders and the National Association of Parents with Children with Speech and Speech-language Disorders.

In a circular (No. 380) entitled “Education for children needing special treatment under the partial revision of the School Education Law and its enforcement regulations”

from the head of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of the Ministry of Education in October 1962, it is stated that “children with speech-language disorders should be educated in their own special class in accordance with the characteristics and degree of their disorders, or they should be trained in a regular class with consideration of their disorders.” This was the first time that the education of children with speech-language disorders was clearly specified.

In 1978, in the report “Ideal school education for children with mild mental-physical disorders” by a research and investigation committee for special education, it was suggested that “children with speech-language disorders should be trained in a special class for such children, in a resource room or by a visiting expert teacher, or in a regular class with consideration of their disorders in accordance with the characteristics and degree of the disorders.” However, such a system has not yet been realized.

In 1987, “The third report on educational reform” was published by the Ad Hoc Council of Education. It suggested that, “considering the actual status of disorders, further efforts should be made in the development and enrichment of the special classes in elementary and junior high schools, including the training system in resource-room classes.” The enrichment of “resource-room training” was also mentioned in the report by the Curriculum Council in 1988.

As an outcome of the above activities, the summary of the discussion of the Council of Researchers and Associates for Resource Room Class, entitled “Measures for enrichment of training in the resource room,” was published in 1992. In the next year, 1993, training in the resource-room method was clearly established as “resource-room training” in the partial revision of the enforcement regulations of the School Education Law.

5. Development of “resource-room training”

(1) Issues related to transformation

The following issues have arisen in association with the transformation from special classes for children with speech-language disorders to the system of “resource-room training” (National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders, 1994)⁹.

① Placement of teachers

Because one teacher per about 10 children was set as the standard, a difficulty arose in establishing special classes in sparsely populated areas such as rural districts because of an insufficient number of children. This problem also became a factor that promoted the diversification of the status of disorders in order to secure subject children.

② Subject children

Because the children in other special classes could

not be trained in the resource room in the new system, it became necessary to devise ways of providing care for such children, such as educational counseling.

③ Number of subject children

Resource-room classes are widely known to be the training field for children enrolled in regular classes. The advantage that children can be trained while they are enrolled in regular classes is recognized. As a result, the need for the education of children with speech-language disorders grew and the number of subject children increased, which led to the need to assign multiple teachers to one class.

④ Content of education and time of training

Because the content and time of training were specified and it became difficult to secure time for studying academic subjects, a necessity arose to be selective of the content of training and to adapt the training method.

(2) Development of resource-room training

Even with the issues associated with the transformation from the system of special classes for children with speech-language disorders, “resource-room training” spread rapidly (Table 5). “Special class training” was gradually replaced by “resource-room training,” and the total number of subjects increased.

TABLE 5 Change in number of children receiving “resource-room training” and “special class training” (for speech-language disorders)

Year	Resource-room training	Special class	Total
1993	9,645	5,285	14,930
1994	11,183	4,162	15,345
1995	13,486	3,380	16,866
1996	16,638	2,639	19,277
1997	19,217	1,821	21,038
1998	20,461	1,513	21,974
1999	21,944	1,298	23,242
2000	23,290	1,193	24,483
2001	24,850	1,211	26,061
2002	26,453	1,166	27,619

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III. Changes after Establishment of “Resource-room training” System

1. Change in status of children

Regarding the changes after the establishment of the “resource-room training” system, the rate of articulation disorders among the subject children increased as a whole. The improved usability of the resource-room system is identified as the reason behind this trend.

language development (delay in language development)

and other disorders also still occur at high rates. The reason may be the actual status of the resource-room system as a site for tutorial training of children with mild developmental disorders who are enrolled in regular classes (National Institute of Special Education, 1993, 1998 & 2003)⁵ (Table 6).

TABLE 6 Changes in disorders of target children

	1991	1996	2001
Articulation disorder (%)	36.1	49.2	43.3
Cleft palate (%)	3.5	3.0	2.0
Stuttering (%)	8.3	8.3	8.4
Hearing impairment (%)	13.4	2.5	8.6
Language development (%)	30.4	30.7	29.9
Others (%)	8.3	6.4	7.7

National survey on actual condition of special class for hearing impairment and speech-language disorders (National Institute of Special Education)

The “resource-room training” system is a system for treating children with mild disorders who are enrolled in regular classes. Teachers should be assigned and the site of training should be specified and managed as the “resource-room-training class” for each disorder type.

Considering “resource-room training” in terms of the type of disorders, speech-language disorders occur at a high rate (Table 7).

Because the number of resource-room-training classes for hearing impairments and emotional disorders is small, children with hearing impairments and those with autism receive training in the resource-room-training class for speech-language disorders in many places where a resource-room-training class for these disorders has not been established. This is also a reason for the diversification of subject disorders (Table 7).

2. Change in training

(1) Responding to individual needs

The diversification of the status of children has changed the perception of the content and method of training.

The themes of national conventions of the National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders include “responding to characteristics of individual disorders” for the 23rd convention (Tochigi, 1994) and “responding to requests (needs) from children” for the 24th (Chiba, 1995) and 26th (Oita, 1997) conventions.

The promotion of training that responds to the needs of individual children has become increasingly required. The titles of recent conventions indicate that it has become

TABLE 7 Rates of disorders of children and students receiving “resource-room training”

Fiscal year	Speech-language disorder (%)	Hearing impairment (%)	Emotional disorder (%)	Amblyopia (%)
1993	78.8	9.3	10.9	0.9
1994	79.5	8.1	11.5	0.8
1995	80.8	7.2	11.1	0.8
1996	83.2	6.4	9.7	0.7
1997	84.0	6.0	9.0	1.0
1998	84.0	6.0	10.0	1.0
1999	85.0	5.2	9.0	1.0
2000	84.5	5.0	9.7	0.5
2001	84.1	5.0	10.4	0.5
2002	83.3	5.1	11.1	0.5

The number of children with physical disabilities and health impairments was 0.2% or lower. (Data on Special Education provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology)

difficult to deal with children by merely typifying the status of their disorders and categorizing them into predetermined cases (Table 8).

At the time of those conventions, educational trends were shifting from the conventional standardized education to education that respects individuality and caters to individual differences. Following discussions of the Ad Hoc Council of Education (from 1984 to 1987), the viewpoints of respecting individuality and education catering to individual differences were presented in the discussion on “desirable education in Japan looking toward the 21st century” at the 15th and 16th Central Education Council meetings (from 1995 to 1997). These discussions are also part of the reasons for the change in content and method of training.

Because education for students with speech-language disorders had mainly been practiced as tutorial training, research and development on the planning and implementation of the “tutorial training program” were conducted in some areas after the “resource-room training” system was institutionalized.

In particular, “resource-room training” was considered complementary training to the education in schools and was aimed at responding to the individual needs of children, their parents, and schools. The ideas of accountability and informed consent, namely, explanation of and gaining consent for the training content from the subject children, their parents, and schools (classes), were introduced in the determination of the training content. These may also be part of the reason for the change in the content and method of training (Metropolitan Board of Education, 1997)⁸.

TABLE 8 Titles of 23rd–32nd national conventions

Year, Host prefecture, Title of convention
1994, 23rd, Tochigi Desirable education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders in accordance with the characteristics of individual disorders: Aiming at accurate educational diagnosis and its better practice
1995, 24th, Chiba Better education for hearing and speech-language disorders: Class management responding to needs of children
1996, 25th, Nara Better education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Pursuing educational practice from a long-term perspective
1997, 26th, Oita Better education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Aiming at classroom and class management and training that responds to needs of children and the local area
1998, 27th, Shizuoka Better education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Seeking desirable support towards individual self-realization on the basis of the role of education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders
1999, 28th, Tokyo Better education for children with hearing and speech-language disorders: Desirable education with respect for individual children
2000, 29th, Yamagata Pursuing desirable education on listening and speaking to enhance sound development of children: Seeking ways to understand and train children
2001, 30th, Shimane Desired support for children to live their own lives
2002, 31st, Hokkaido Desirable training based on educational diagnosis of children with speech-language disorders
2003, 32nd, Gunma Desirable education on language and listening to support rich communication: What is revealed by various forms of collaboration

(2) Enrichment of life and establishment of self-identity

“Desirable support for children to live their own lives” was featured in the title of the 30th national convention of the National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders (Shimane 2001).

In the keynote proposal of the convention, Yoji Matsubara (a teacher at Matsubara Elementary School in Hamada

City, Shimane Prefecture, at the time) proposed that, while conventional training is aimed at the improvement and overcoming the disorder status of the children, it should focus on the life of the children and devise “support for children to live their own lives.” He brought up the necessity of accepting the present status of the children, not attributing difficulties in life to the children’s disability, and providing support for the enrichment of the children’s lives through relationships with the people around them (Matsubara, 2001)⁵.

In other words, instead of the viewpoint emphasizing the overcoming of disorders and improvement of children’s ability, education focusing on individual initiative and the lives of children with disorders was suggested.

In the Plan for People with Disabilities -- Seven-Years Normalization Strategy, which was drawn up in 1995, “aiming at improving the quality of life (QOL)” was considered as one of the seven aims for promoting measures on the basis of rehabilitation and normalization. “The necessity of improving the social life, including not only activities of daily living (ADL) but also the cultural activity and family life of disabled people” was also indicated. Such changes in the concept of measures for disabled people has also stimulated changes in the concept of education for children with speech-language disorders.

IV . Tentative discussion of issues in education for speech-language disorders

Thus far, we have been following the course of education for children with speech-language disorders from the viewpoints of the “education system” and the “ideas and content of education” considering the correlation between these viewpoints.

Here, the changes are reexamined and a tentative discussion on the various issues is proposed on the basis of the answers to the following questions. (1) What kind of children are the subjects of the “speech-language training class?” (2) What are the content and the methods of education for children with speech-language disorders? (3) What qualifications are required of teachers providing education for children with speech-language disorders?

1. What kind of children are the subjects of the “speech-language training class?”

The “speech-language training class” is established as a forum of education responding to speech-language disorders from an institutional viewpoint.

At the beginning, the “speech-language training class” was established as a forum for speech-language therapy. Since then, its function has been extended to respond to the various educational needs of children. This change, namely,

the issue of the diversification of disorders, has continued since the late 1970s when the number of “speech-language training classes” rapidly increased. The issue at the time was predominantly dealing with children with delayed language development. Currently, the issue has shifted to dealing with children who, in regular classes, have difficulties in learning and in life as part of a group.

This change can be understood as an expansion of the content and function by shifting the focus from the aspect of speech to that of language and from the formal aspect of speech-language (speech-language training) to the functional aspect (communication) in the framework of education for children with speech-language disorders.

These issues have also been presented as issues of “speech-language training class” management. There has been discussion among those who regard the “speech-language training class” as a site of speech-language therapy for children with speech difficulties and those who regard it as a site for providing support to children who are enrolled in regular classes but have other needs. By analogy to the education system in the US, whether the “speech-language training class” should be a “speech clinic” or a “resource room” was also discussed.

There was divergence in the viewpoints of the parties participating in the discussion in many cases; some emphasized desirable education for speech-language disorders and its specialization while others focused on the desirable function of the “speech-language training class.”

What we know from this discussion is that, in practice, the “speech-language training class” has been managed from both the viewpoints of speech-language therapy and support for children with various needs. Both viewpoints have been emphasized and put into practice with regard to local circumstances, the history of the establishment, and the perspective of the parties concerned at the time.

2. What are the content and methods of education for children with speech-language disorders?

Education for children with speech-language disorders started as speech-language therapy. At first, on the basis of knowledge of speech pathology, the purpose of the education was mostly understood as improvement of language skills of children with speech-language difficulties through an educational method. It was often said that, “Speech-language disorders are curable disorders that can be treated just as tooth decay is treated, and going to the speech-language training class is similar to going to a dental clinic.”

However, along with the diversification of the subject children, the aspect of support for their development was emphasized. The emphasis on the content and method of training shifted from the aspect of teaching to that of promoting speech-language activities of the children in which the teacher is part of the environment, and the training has the function of developing the environment surrounding the children and encouraging and supporting those nurturing the children.

Recently, on the basis of knowledge obtained from research on communication disorders, training and support focusing on the relationship between two persons, namely, a child and a person who is part of the child's environment, are being carried out with the view that speech-language disorders are not problems specific to the child but are communication disorders.

Educational support that emphasizes the enrichment of the child's life, not on the difficulty or delay in language or the improvement of the child's ability, is also being attempted. Such support is provided from the standpoint of focusing on respecting the individual initiative of the child and on the improvement of the quality of the child's life.

These old and new viewpoints can also be understood in terms of the difference in the two standpoints concerning the education of children with speech-language disorders.

One standpoint is that the education of children with speech-language disorders involves "activities for alleviating the speech-language disorders of children by an educational (not medical) approach," and the second one is that education comprises "activities for understanding all aspects of the children with speech-language disorders and for supporting the enrichment of their lives, self-establishment, and self-realization."

Content and methods of training have been proposed and practiced from each standpoint, which considers the characteristic differences.

What we should understand here is that education for children with speech-language disorders has both aspects described above, i.e., improving the disorders and supporting children to enrich their lives. Each aspect has been emphasized and put into practice at different times depending on the actual status of the individual children, the education and culture of the local area, and the view concerning speech-language and education of the teacher in charge.

3. What qualifications are required of the teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders?

Efforts to improve the qualification of teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders have been made for a long time within the framework of the issue of fostering and training teachers.

To date, the teaching curriculum for fostering teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders has been followed in teacher-training colleges across the country. The national government, local governments, and some research organizations have also offered training. The qualification system for these teachers has also been a concern. The development of a licensing system to ensure the expertise of teachers has been suggested (Council of Researchers and Associates on Improvement and Enrichment of Special Needs Education-the 1st and 2nd reports-1998 and 1999).

Under these circumstances, discussion on the expertise of teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders was triggered in 1998 by the legislation of the licensing system for speech therapists, which is a national certification. Various questions were raised in the discussion: should teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders obtain this qualification; what is the difference between specialists (such as speech therapists) and the teachers; what is lacking in the expertise of these teachers compared with that of specialists (such as speech therapists); and what is the expertise of teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders¹¹?

The key to answering these questions is discussed below.

If teachers involved in educating children with speech-language disorders have the same expertise and role as specialists (speech therapists), they would be replaced by the specialists (speech therapists).

Teachers for the education of children with speech-language disorders are expected to have qualifications in both "specialized content concerning speech-language disorders" and "specialized content concerning education."

The education of children with speech-language disorders involves helping such children find their individuality, choose their own way of life, and achieve self-realization. The teachers involved in such education must have confidence in and be able to explain not only their knowledge of speech-language disorders but also their overall knowledge of the mind and development of children, the life of the children at school, at home and in

the local community, the academic subjects and fields, and the method of supporting children.

V . Conclusion

The education of children with speech-language disorders has passed through a history of conscientious study and efforts by people in the aspects of both the “development of content and methods of education” and the “development of the system.” Moreover, its educational resources have been enriched as well as modified according to current thought.

The education of children with speech-language disorders began with the emphasis on the “individual” and, along with the system of resource- room training, has accumulated more than 40 years of history in its practice and achievements.

In June 1997, the Central Education Council suggested the “necessity of education that responds to individual ability and aptitude” in a report on “desirable education in Japan looking toward the 21st century.” Their concept was described as follows: “Education is the activity of supporting the ‘self-searching journey.’ Through education, children acquire the foundations and basis to live in society as well as find their individual characteristics and choose a suitable way of life for themselves. During these successive procedures, children gain various experiences through the process of trial and error and seek their self-realization. Appropriate support for such children is the most important mission of education.” “Considering the nature of education, respecting individual characteristics as something irreplaceable and trying to develop them should be the basic concept behind educational reform.”

In March 2003, the Council of Researchers and Associates on Desirable Special Needs Education in the Future, in their report “Desirable Special Needs Education in the Future (final report),” suggested a “transformation to ‘special support education’ that provides appropriate educational support in response to the educational needs of individual children with disorders,” reflecting a transformation from mass education to education for individual needs.

The trend in education is directed to the viewpoint of the “individual.”

The viewpoint of education is being shifted from “looking at individuals from the eyes of society” to “looking at society from the eyes of individuals.”

The viewpoint of education for children with speech-language disorders is also being shifted from “support

for individuals to participate in society” to “support for individuals to live a rich life.”

More than 40 years ago, our predecessors made efforts to establish education for children with language disorders, focusing on individuals; now, education is again being directed towards the “individual” with new meaning.

The aspects of “individuals” and “society” are always at opposing ends, and the viewpoint of education wavers between them. Someday the viewpoint of education may again shift in another direction. Education for children with speech-language disorders should also change accordingly.

We believe that, even if the system of education for children with disorders changes in the future, the educational resources and culture developed through the education of children with speech-language disorders will continue and be further enriched and developed in line with the trends and ideals of the coming age.

Notes

(1) Education of children with speech-language disorders

The education of children with speech-language disorders is literally understood as the education of children with speech-language disorders. However, it has a different meaning from the education of children with disorders in other aspects in terms of system and content.

First, because speech-language disorders also occur in association with other disorders, the training concerning speech-language disorders associated with other disorders is given in the context of education for the major disorder. Therefore, the education of children with speech-language disorders is the education of children whose major problem is speech-language disorder.

Second, because children with speech-language disorders can learn academic subjects in a regular class, training in the education of children with speech-language disorders mainly consists of dealing with the speech-language disorder.

Because of these institutional features, the education of children with speech-language disorders is characterized by the training concept emphasizing the “removal and reduction of the disorder.”

(2) Remedial training

Remedial training is conducted for children with difficulties in learning subjects. Occasions and opportunities for tutorial training are designated separately from regular

classes. It is also conducted as special training with the content and methods devised in response to the difficulties of individual children.

(3) Remedial education

In this paper, this term is used to denote the investigation of the cause of poor school performance and the proper teaching of children showing poor school performance provided by specialist teachers. It does not indicate any direct medical treatment.

(4) Resource-room system

Kiyomatsu Okuma started using this term in the field of education for children with speech-language disorders. It is a form of training in which most of the education concerning the teaching of academic subjects is given in regular classes and the special training concerning speech-language disorders is given at a special site (such as in a speech-language therapy class).

Until the legal establishment of the system of "resource-room training," the form of resource-room training was called the "resource-room system" or "resource-room method" and was one type of training in special classes. Kiyomatsu Okuma was the first to use the term "resource-room system," and Kenji Hamasaki, the term "resource-room method."

(5) Speech therapist

The national certification system for speech therapists (Speech Therapists Law) was legislated in 1997. It is mainly designed as the certification of specialists who are engaged in medical and welfare support for people with speech-language and hearing disorders. As a transition measure within five years after legislation, teachers who had engaged in training for speech-language and hearing disorders in the schools were also qualified for the national exam for speech therapists if they met certain conditions.

(6) Speech-language training class

The site for "resource room training (for speech-language disorders)" is commonly called the "speech-language training class." Conventionally, this term had been used as an alternative to the "special class for children with speech-language disorders." The site for resource-room training is also called the "resource-room-training class for children with speech-language disorders" in many cases. However, there is no official provision on how to describe the site of "resource-room training." Considering the current status in which the system of the special class for children with speech-language disorders coexists with the resource-room system, we used the term "speech-language training class," which has been widely used for a long time.

(7) Teachers of education for children with speech-language disorders

The term is used for the teachers involved in the education of children with speech-language disorders. In this paper, we used this term for the teachers of the "speech-language training class." Some teacher-training colleges have a teaching curriculum for fostering teachers of the "speech-language training class;" however, there is no licensing system that ensures the expertise of such teachers. Specialists in speech-language disorders are qualified under the teacher's licensing system for self-care activity in schools for disabled children; however, this system is not designed for teachers who are responsible for "resource-room training (of children with speech-language disorders)."

(8) Speech-language therapy

Generally, "the process of promoting linguistic improvement and interpersonal adaptation of a person with speech-language disorders is called speech-language therapy (Encyclopedia of Speech-language Disorders: Iwasaki Academic Publisher)."

(9) Therapy class

This term is used for the remedial training class for children having delay or difficulties in learning Japanese and arithmetic. Aside from specialized teachers, the teachers of regular classes teach the class concurrently in some cases.

(10) National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders

This is a nationwide association consisting of teachers of special classes for children with hearing disorders and children with speech-language disorders; it was established in 1971. It has promoted research on the content and method of training and has made efforts to improve the educational conditions. National conventions are held yearly in cooperation with related organizations across the country. It also publishes the journal "*Kikoe-to-Kotoba* (Listening and Speaking) (in Japanese)."

(11) "Pioneering the 21st century: desirable education (support) for children with hearing and speech-language disorders" was discussed from various viewpoints by the Promotion Committee for Training and Management of the National Public School Association of Education for Hearing and Speech-language Disorders.

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