Longitudinal analysis of future time perspective in Japanese children

Manabu Tsuzuki
(Chuo University)

The author has been examined developmental changes concerning learning motivation and future time perspective in elementary and junior high school children by a longitudinal survey since 2000. The purpose of this study was to examine two questions: (a) whether children’s future time perspective change at intervals of one year, and (b) whether future time perspective are affected by level of their academic ability. To address these questions, 1,320 children (10 to 15 year old) were studied twice: first semester of 2000 (Time 1) and 2001 (Time 2). At both Time 1 and Time 2 children completed a questionnaire consisted of six scales including future time perspective scale (10 items) and a self rating scale related to academic ability. T-test showed that total average scores of three of four subscales in Future time perspective were significantly different between Time 1 and Time 2. Hope for the future and desire for having future goals decreased at intervals of one year and contrary emptiness increased. All children were categorized into four groups according to their self rating score of academic ability at Time 1 and Time 2: (a) low academic ability at both times (Low group), (b) academic ability improved at Time 2 comparing Time 1 (Improvement group), (c) academic ability fell at Time 2 comparing Time 1 (Fall group), and (d) high academic ability high at both times (High Group). In Improvement group, hope for the future, desire for having future goals, and time management & planning remarkably increased at Time 2, and emptiness remarkably decreased. In Fall group, hope for the future, desire for having future goals, and time management & planning remarkably decreased at Time 2, and emptiness remarkably increased. In High group and low group little change was found at Time 1 and Time 2 except in Low group hope for the future decreased. These results suggested that (a) children gradually tended to see their future hopelessly and uneasily with grade, and (b) these tendencies are striking in those who have lower level of academic ability.