Developmental changes of future time perspective during the transition from elementary school to junior high school

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Outline of this presentation
1) Research background
2) Overview of Japanese educational system
3) Meaning of transition from elementary school to junior high school
4) Empirical data
5) Conclusion

Research background
My interest: future time perspective
An element of person’s life space which included the totality of personal past, present and future (Lewin, 1942, 1951)

Future time perspective
Cognition: the extension to which a person imagines and sets one’s goals in the future
Emotion: the positive or negative degree of emotional feelings to which a person has in one’s past, present and future
Motivation: the extension to which a person would like to have goals in the future and to pursue them

General framework
Research projects
Longitudinal studies on future time perspective
1997-1999 : from university to society
2000-2003 : from elementary school to junior high school
2004-2007 : from junior high school to high school

Why longitudinal study?
Time 1  Time 2  -------->
Planning          Behavior
Set goals  Do  Not Do  Not Get

Longitudinal study clarifies the relation between Time 1 (present thinking) & Time 2 (future behavior and its result)

Japanese educational system
Compulsory education
Elementary school (ES) : 6 years
Junior high school (JHS) : 3 years

Higher education
High school : 3 years
University : 4 years
College : 2 years

Differences between ES and JHS
Elementary school  Junior High school
a class teacher  a subject teacher
: one teacher for one class : various teachers for each subject
school record  school record
: absolute evaluation : relative evaluation (until 2001 academic year)

Transition from ES to JHS
This transition has two meanings.
1) Educational system transition
elementary school => junior high school
at ease, relax => stressful, competitive
2) Developmental transition
late childhood => early adolescence
period of developmental crisis
Plan of longitudinal study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>grade year</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>2003</td>
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Cohort A | Cohort B | Cohort C

Purposes of this study

1) To examine developmental changes of students’ future time perspective from 4th to 9th grade.
2) To examine the relation between self-esteem and future time perspective during the transition from ES to JHS.
3) To discuss the obtained results from the viewpoint of developmental and environmental transition from elementary school to junior high school.

Method

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>JHS</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 2000 spring</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>1,109</td>
<td>2,259</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) 2001 winter</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>1,109</td>
<td>2,246</td>
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<td>3) 2001 spring</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td>2,263</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) 2002 winter</td>
<td>1,087</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>2,172</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) 2002 spring</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>2,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) 2003 winter</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>2,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) 2003 spring</td>
<td>1,123</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>2,251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures

Future time perspective (10 items)

1) Hope for the future (4 items)
   I have already decided what I want to become in the future.

2) Desire for having future goals (2 items)
   I want to have my own life goal.

3) Emptiness (2 items)
   I feel as if everyday has passed away.

4) Planning (2 items)
   I can make a study plan and study by myself.

Self-esteem (4 items)

I'm generally satisfied with myself.
I sometimes think that I'm not competent person. (reversal item)

Other measures

general malaise (8 times)
evaluation about school activities, friends and life situation (9 items)
Procedure
Data collection was carried out by teachers of each class in school classroom during ordinary school hours. At the beginning, the students were given a written sheet of informed consent and asked if they would participate in the study. The data collection was carried out during first and third semester of 2000-2002 academic year, and first semester of 2003 academic year.

Results
1) Longitudinal changes in future time perspective from elementary school to junior high school
2) Relation between self-esteem and future time perspective during the transition

Participants (1)
Four hundred forty-three students (191 male and 252 female) who completed same questionnaire seven times from 2000 to 2003 academic year. Participants were divided into following three different cohorts.
Cohort A (149 students)
Cohort B (178 students)
Cohort C (116 students)

Two-way ANOVAs Sex(2) □ Time(7) in each cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTP cohort</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sex □ Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emptiness</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>**</td>
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</table>

* p<.05  ** p<.01

Fig.1 Hope for the future

Fig.2 Desire for having future goals
1) The mean score of “Hope for the future” decreased with grade. In cohort B and C, it dropped down rapidly from the first to third semester of 7th grade.

2) The mean score of “Desire for having future goals” decreased from 4th to 7th grade, and increased from 8th to 9th grade. In cohort B and C, it dropped rapidly from the first to third semester of 7th grade. The level of scores were different among three cohorts.

3) The mean score of “Emptiness” slightly decreased from 4th to 7th grade in cohort A, and inversely it gradually increased from 6th to 9th grade in cohort B and C.

4) In cohort A, the mean score of “Planning” dropped rapidly from the first to third semester of 4th grade, and from the third semester of 6th grade to the first semester of 7th grade. In cohort B and C, it decreased from the first to third semester of 7th grade.

Participants (2)
Seven hundred fifty-five students (366 male and 389 female) completed same questionnaire at the third semester (winter) of 6th grade and first semester (spring) of 7th grade. Participants were divided into following three different cohorts.
- Cohort A (269 students)
- Cohort B (353 students)
- Cohort C (234 students)

Self-esteem Diff-score: 7th grade – 6th grade
Grouping

Up-group: self-esteem score increased after entering junior high school (score>0)
224 (male 111; female 113)

Same-group: self-esteem didn't change during the transition (score=0)
194 (male 87; female 107)

Down-group: self-esteem score decreased after entering junior high school (score<0)
306 (male 152; female 154)

Two-way ANOVA  Sex(2) □ cohort(3)
No difference was found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>cohort</th>
<th>Sex □ cohort</th>
<th>self-esteem diff-score</th>
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</table>

* p<.05  ** p<.01

| Two-way ANOVAs  SE-DS(3) □ Time(2) (self-esteem diff-score) |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                   | SE-DS | Time | SE-DS □ Time |
| Hope              |       |      |             |
| Desire            |       | **   |             |
| Emptiness         |       | **   | **          |
| Planning          |       |      |             |

* p<.05  ** p<.01

Fig.5  Hope for the future

Fig.6  Desire for having future goals

Fig.7  Emptiness
1) The score of “Hope for the future” decreased in the Down-group of self-esteem.

2) The score of “Emptiness” increased in the Up-group of self-esteem and conversely it decreased in the Down-group of self-esteem.

3) The Down and Up group showed contrasting future time perspective in the “Hope for the future” and “Emptiness”.

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### Conclusion

1) Students strongly lost their hope for the future with grade. This tendency may be related with their cognitive development which can make them see their own life and future situation more exactly. On the other hand, it may be caused by strict school environment concerning educational evaluation and future career choice.

2) In the other three measures of future time perspective, the cohort effects are bigger than grade effects.

3) “Emptiness” increased from the first to third semester of 7th grade and the other three measures decreased during the same period. It means that transitional experience may not effect on future time perspective immediately after entering into junior high school. After students get used to their school life, they notice some differences between elementary school and junior high school so that they gradually become to see their future more negatively.

4) Student who has confident self concept during the transition from elementary school to junior high school sees their present situation and future life more positive way.

5) To make the support system to improve student’s self-esteem during the transition is crucial to develop his/her future time perspective and to make him/her better adjustment for new environment (junior high school).