Chapter 11: Behavioural Support in Japan

Yoriko Kikkawa^a, Noriko Hirasawa^b, and Kenichi Ohkubo^c

^aGriffith Institute for Educational Research, Griffith University,
y.kikkawa@griffith.edu.au

^bGraduate School of Education, Gifu University, hirasawa@gifu-u.ac.jp; and

^cFaculty of Education, Kio University, k.ohkubo@kio.ac.jp

Abstract

Early in 2016, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was enacted in Japan. It made the establishment of an inclusive educational system a national priority and required Japanese schools and teachers to accommodate individual needs of students with special needs in schools. An adequate balance between individual and group needs has been challenging for classroom teachers dealing with behavioural needs of individual students while teaching a whole class. A traditional Japanese approach to teaching a lesson in regular classes has been aligned with and supported by the lesson study approach, whereby schools engage in professional development activities. These activities focus on cooperative planning and monitoring of students' learning progress in the selected curricular content over a school year. As part of lesson planning and preparation of instructional supports, teachers design and anticipate peer interactions among classmates. This social focus contrasts with the English-speaking countries (e.g., USA, UK, and Australia). For example, the use of school-wide positive behaviour support to improve student behaviours in English-speaking countries has been treated as an efficient foundation for including individual students with high needs in school. In Japan, there has been an increasing interest in this behavioural approach as a potential solution for addressing the requirements defined in the newly enforced law. It is proposed that mutually informed integration of the culture- and value-based practice of traditional lesson study with school-wide behaviour support can become a culturally appropriate approach to behavioural support.

Keywords:

behaviour support, culture, schools, lesson study, positive behaviour support, Japan

Introduction

In Japan, behavioural support for students with special educational needs (SEN) is challenging especially in a classroom setting. There have been changes to national law and reforms to professional development that have fostered inclusive schooling. On the other hand, there has been an historical commitment to holistic education of individuals within their sociocultural context. Therefore, Western perspectives on the individual and the group do not adapt easily or directly into Japanese classrooms.

Public school teachers have reported learning difficulties or behavioural concerns in 6.5% of the population in a national survey of compulsory schooling across 6-year elementary and 3-year secondary school years (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology: MEXT, 2012). An earlier report noted similar data and highlighted a lack of support for students with special educational needs in regular classrooms (MEXT, 2002b). Five years after the enforcement of a new system of special needs education, the 2012 report noted improved provision of support for students with SEN. However, it also stressed a need for further improvement in how to deliver effective group instruction (MEXT, 2012). In other words, they must have a clear way of dealing with individual needs while teaching the entire class.

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* became effective in February 2016. An inclusive education system was held to be a national priority (Article 24). In this system, individuals with disabilities are not excluded from general education, have equal access to quality primary and secondary education in their local communities, and are provided with reasonable accommodation for individual needs. There are three educational priorities for individuals with and without disabilities to learn together through lifelong learning:

- (a) the full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and human diversity;
- (b) the development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents, and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential; [and]
- (c) support for persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

Reconstruction of special needs education system towards inclusion has to work with the mainstream educational culture of professional practice (Chokshi & Fernandez, 2004). In Japanese schools, almost all teachers are engaged in in-service professional development called *jyugyou kenkyu*, or lesson study, to improve their everyday teaching (Lewis, 2016). Teachers form groups with a specific curriculum interest (e.g., mathematics, special needs education) within their school (Lewis, Perry, & Friedkin, 2009). Group members work collaboratively to improve a particular lesson that addresses overarching educational problems at the school, aligned with national educational emphases (Kikkawa & Bryer, 2013). Together, they plan the lesson, teach it or observe another teacher teach it, and reflect on student engagement and ways to improve the lesson over time.

Prevailing cultural influences on current inclusive practice involve regular school commitment to (a) whole-person education, (b) classroom as community, and (c) lesson study. Lesson study contributes to delivery of whole-person education and is a mechanism

of building school capacity in Japan, which has been integrated into university initial teacher education and in-school professional development. Although it is almost universally implemented in Japan (i.e., 99% of elementary schools; 98 % of junior high schools, 95 % of public high schools), use of school-based lesson study is not required by law and has been managed by schools with variations among schools, prefectures, and levels of schooling (Lewis, 2016).

Historically, Japanese education has pursued a philosophy that "group is essential for development of children" (Kikkawa, 2014, p. 50). Yoshida (2009) highlighted a need for research about *shūdan* for inclusive education. Although the direct translation of this term is "group", Yoshida regarded *shūdan*, in relation of special needs education, as (a) interrelationship between individuals and class and (b) interaction between lesson development and class building. According to Yoshida (2009), the interrelationship between individuals and class reflects a fundamental principle of classroom lessons in lesson study practice and teaching theory:

The more an individual evolves, the more the class evolves; and the more the class evolves, the more an individual evolves. (Translated from Shimizu, 1997; cited in Yoshida, 2009, p. 122)

At the same time, Japanese researchers increasingly use practices from Western countries to respond to behavioural needs in Japanese schools. For example, positive behaviour support (PBS) was first implemented in 2000 and, since then, has progressively showed its effectiveness in Japanese special and regular schools (Hirasawa, 2009). However, a practical barrier to implementation of PBS has been resistance from Japanese schools and teachers. The strong sense of social-cultural educational value embedded in Japanese classroom practice has required Japanese researchers to search for a culturally appropriate way to apply the behavioural approach to the current educational system (e.g., Sugimoto, 2015; Wakui, 2007).

History of special education services in Japan

In the mid-2000s, Japanese education and welfare endorsed a view of developmental disability consistent with the international movement toward inclusive education. Specifically, the first official documentation in Japan to define developmental disabilities that usually become apparent at an early age was the *Law to Support Persons with Developmental Disabilities* enacted in 2004. This law clearly mentioned the support necessary for a person with identified disabilities. Categories included autism, Asperger's syndrome, and other pervasive developmental disorders, learning disabilities/disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders, and other similar "cerebral dysfunctions" (Section 1 of Article 2; Japanese Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare, 2004). In 2011, the *Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities* was amended to include developmental disabilities legally into the national disability framework (Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2011).

A *Revised School Education Law* that promoted Special Needs Education, *tokubetsu-shien-kyouiku*, was also issued in 2005 and enforced in 2007 (MEXT, 2007). Its major

change was the naming of schools or classrooms for students or children with any disabilities. Whereas the previous law stipulated disability-specialised schools or classrooms depending on the category of disabilities (e.g., vision, hearing, intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, and health impairments), the revised law renamed “Schools for Special Needs Education” without reference to categories and defined four options of student placement: (a) special needs education schools, (b) special needs education classrooms, (c) *tsūkyū* or resource room, and (d) regular education classrooms. This change reflected the national shift toward accommodating special academic, behavioural, and social needs of the students without intellectual disabilities who were enrolled in regular education classrooms without access to additional support and ineligible for educational support service under the previous system (MEXT, 2002b).

This change required schools and teachers to improve education for those students. More research and practice targeted students with developmental disabilities enrolled in regular education classrooms and resource rooms. This work differed from that developed and employed within the previous framework of *tokushū-kyōiku*, or special education (i.e., special schools and special classes). Some school tiered instruction for SEN has extended the traditional framework of special education in Japan; some research on special needs education has been informed by Western behavioural research and practice.

Tiered instructional practice

The principle of whole-person education that aims to foster wellbeing and learning for all students is somehow aligned with tiered instruction and with support for student behaviour in the classroom. Takemura (2011) suggested that the instructional practice and strategies considered effective for Japanese students can be aligned with a tiered system of behaviour support. With respect to the principles of lesson study focusing on improvement of teaching, Benedict, Park, Brownell, Lauterbach, and Kiely (2013, p. 23) outlined a possible integration of lesson study and response-to-intervention (RTI):

The traditional features of lesson study cycle are provided along with practical steps that can be taken within each component to support general and special education teachers in aligning the curricula, goals, and strategies to RTI framework.

Table 1 frames lesson study practice within the school tiered approach (see Chapter 2). Overall, this practice is aligned with the educational values of Japanese regular education and its strong emphasis on whole-person education (Kikkawa, 2014). Universal practice appears to be well established in Tier 1 lessons, and Tier 2 is strongly aligned with Tier 1, as Japanese teaching considers peer interactions within *han* group activities as integral to its wider commitment to the class as a community. However, within Tier 2, students with SEN engage in *han* in the small classes in special education settings, while some recent work has started considering *han* activities for students with SEN in regular education settings.

Table 1. Tiered Approach to Cultural Practice

Tier 1: <i>School-wide lesson study approach to plan, implement, evaluate, and improve “teaching”; class management aiming to build class as community where students can ask for help and help each other.</i>	
Identify research topic (school-wide), learning aims (each curriculum area), learning goals (class-specific)	
Plan for a lesson plan with universal instruction for all students (clear and precise instruction) and well-organised learning materials and tools (visual support); includes a script of possible learning and teaching interactions in the class.	
Deliver a lesson to the class, while teacher actively observes, listens to, and question students by using cooperative learning strategies (group-oriented contingencies; peer-mediated support) with either the entire class or small peer groups (<i>han</i>).	
Evaluate teaching; (a) focusing on ongoing improvements of teaching, (b) reflecting on the lesson as a whole, and (c) using pedagogical questions focusing on students’ thinking and learning (how the class responds to teaching and interact with each other) and on teacher’s teaching behaviours (how the teacher interacts with the class and deliver the lesson content).	
Improve teaching, with findings included in the next plan	
Tier 2: <i>Develop students’ abilities to “learn within a group” (historically in special education classes and some recent work in mainstreaming classes and han) using individual support plan for students</i>	
Plan for differentiated instructions, articulated within the lesson plan for the class.	
Assist the students involved in the group by using small-group activities (e.g., daily chores) to facilitate sense of group responsibility and leadership; using role play; incorporating individual interests in group activities; using small-group social-skills training; modifying teaching methods (e.g., learning materials, options of responding) and learning content; using cooperative learning as above	
Evaluate teaching: Same as Tier 1	
Improve teaching: Same as Tier 1	
Tier 3: <i>One-on-one support for jiritsu-katsudou (activities focusing on independence); conducted usually in pull-out situations such as resource rooms or corner of the classrooms</i>	
This practice is more exposed to Western evidence-based practice than are Tiers 1 and 2.	

Thus, there is tiered awareness of instructional strategies for all students in the class, for groups needing extra support, and for individuals needing intensive intervention. Many evidence-based practices require one-to-one instruction with the target student. However, regular classroom teachers in Japan have expressed concern that they are not able to focus solely on the targeted student in the classroom environment where many other students are present (Okitsu & Sekido, 2007). Therefore, it appears that the linkage between Tier 3 to Tiers 1 and 2 is relatively weak, because the use of evidence-based strategies of the instruction of individual students with SEN tends to fall outside traditional classroom practice.

Observation of regular classrooms in Japanese schools suggested that teachers view the classroom not only as a setting for their teaching but also as a direct means for teaching through peers’ mutual interactions during lessons (Matoba & Sarkar Arani, 2006; Sarkar Arani & Matoba, 2006). Moreover, small peer groups (*han*) have been used routinely in regular education to facilitate children’s sense of group responsibility and leadership.

Different levels of group responsibility and leadership are used to manage each class, each year group, and the school as a whole. Teachers use group activities where “children do activities together” to facilitate the children’s experience and understanding of group responsibility and used peer support to develop positive peer relationships across the school community. This group-oriented practice has been developed and used as part of class management techniques and is recently used as support for students with SEN in regular education settings.

Instruction involves ongoing assessment in which “teachers observe, listen, and question to gather evidence of their students’ learning as they teach” (Crockett, 2007, p. 612). The lesson study group undertakes ongoing and holistic assessment of student learning through their observation and discussion of a lesson, to create a productive moment of learning and teaching. This pedagogical view is student-centred and comprehensive.

Pedagogical decision-making begins with concerns about student learning. Student thinking was never de-coupled from planning or teaching [the] lesson. Pedagogy was never de-coupled from student matters (Crockett, 2007, p. 619).

The everyday practice of special educators is aimed to enrich (a) *shakaisei* or social nature, (b) engagement, and (c) independence in their students (Kikkawa, 2014). In-school research (i.e., lesson study) is used to explore the practical meaning of these whole-person aims, develop a lesson plan, identify teaching strategies to achieve the aim, implement the lesson, and reflect on how to improve their everyday practice (Kikkawa, 2014). As in traditional practice in regular classrooms (Crockett, 2007), student thinking and learning are always the centre of teachers’ pedagogical decision-making. This student-centred lens also appears to be embedded in support for students with SEN in regular education settings. Fujino (2013) reviewed psychosocial interventions focusing on supporting social problems, which school-aged children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders (ASD) had when they interacted with their typically developed peers. He found that, in contrast to Western literature focusing on skills building, the interventions conducted in Japanese schools were focused on supporting individuals by intervening in a wide range of individual problems closely linked to the participants’ life histories and social conditions. For example, in a study by Okada, Goto, and Ueno (2005), which aimed to improve social cognition, junior high school students with Asperger syndrome were guided to assess the social situation in which a problem had occurred, list solutions to the problem, role-play each solution to predict the result, select the best solution, and practise the situation repeatedly.

Kikkawa (2014) observed that Japanese special educators teaching in classrooms for students with special needs work hard to establish a community, in which students work together without direct instruction by the teacher. Assessment is formative, diagnostic, and ongoing. Although these educators did not conduct formal quantitative data collection (e.g., functional assessment), close analysis of interactions by the students with peers, teacher, and learning content involved profound reflections about multiple members across a series of lessons. A qualitative but meaningful holistic understanding of classroom interactions between students and their peers, teacher, and learning tasks (Ball & Forzani, 2007) can be used to identify students’ perspectives on why the particular interaction (good or bad) happened and then consider how to proceed with this interaction in the next lesson. This relationship-based, interpersonal approach to assessment and intervention appeared to be

somewhat similar to pivotal response training (Koegel & Koegel, 2006) in that the teachers facilitate the children's social initiations with strategies of waiting, prompting behaviours and interactions without verbal communication, and scaffolding interactions.

Western informed, evidence-based behaviour support

The development of research and practice that is informed by Western literature has occurred in (a) institutions and research centres outside schools, (b) special schools or special education classes for students with intellectual disabilities, and (c) regular education classes and resource rooms. After the *Japanese Association for Behavior Analysis* was established in 1983, Japanese researchers started reporting studies of behavioural interventions for individuals with intellectual disabilities and ASD. Earlier studies were mostly conducted within research centres attached to universities or clinical institutes. From the 2000s, more studies were conducted within school settings, and teachers in special needs schools conducted most studies, which focused on interventions for individual students with intellectual disabilities (e.g., individualised instruction plan and social-skills training).

Several Japanese reviews examined studies related to behaviour support in school settings (e.g., Dojo, Noda, & Sanomaru, 2008; Fukumoto & Ohkubo, 2013; Okamoto, 2014; Sugimoto, 2015; Takemura, 2011). For example, Dojo et al. (2008) reviewed 173 articles about behavioural interventions in school settings for children with developmental disabilities from 1990 to 2005. The review included 70 articles from four Japanese journals and 103 articles from seven Western journals related to applied behaviour analysis (ABA). The reviewers found that all studies were mostly focused on individuals in special needs education classes within elementary schools and highlighted a need for behaviour support in regular education classrooms. However, whereas non-Japanese studies focused more on task and learning engagement and social behaviour, Japanese studies focused more on communicative behaviour and self-management.

Studies of interventions to include students with developmental disabilities in regular education settings increased. For example, Fukumoto and Ohkubo (2013) reported more studies in regular education settings after 2006. However, there was concern that teacher skills in supporting an individual student with SEN overlooked other students in the class and fostered a psychological distance between the student with special needs and the class. In line with social-cultural pedagogy in regular education and in the previous approach to special education, Yoshida (2009) argued that classroom teachers also require skills in group instruction that enable individual students to participate in the "group life" of the class. Kawamura (2005) also argued that teachers should consider how to equip the students with skills to participate in the class instead of concentrating on student participation in the class (i.e., the process of individual development rather than the result).

Shijyou (2013) outlined the research trend after the transition into group-oriented contingency among diverse learners in inclusive classrooms as a medium to support individuals with developmental disabilities. She aligned this type of behaviour support with analysis of group dynamics in the class and highlighted a need to embed individual characteristics of students with and without special needs in lesson planning. Most teachers

apply a social-cultural lens to build a “class as community” (*shūdan dukuri*). In regular education classrooms, the teachers arrange class interactions so that students with needs ask peers for help and so that the peers are willing to help those students (Shijyou, 2013).

It appears that a similar system of class-wide support has been developed in both a small class (i.e., special needs education class) and for a large class (i.e., regular education class). In special needs classrooms, teachers seek to establish positive and supportive relationships among students (Kikkawa, 2014). They carefully observe peer interactions and relationships, plan a lesson of group activity where students help each other, and facilitate peer interactions during the lesson.

In recent studies, there is increasing attention to more group-oriented practices (e.g., class- or school-wide approaches) in order to deliver behavioural support in the everyday classroom environment. Some studies reported that behavioural interventions using ABA-based practices (e.g., PBS, functional behaviour assessment) improve class-wide engagement in daily chores (e.g., cleaning, preparing school lunch) usually performed by students, which also contributed to the on-task behaviour of students with SEN (Tsurumi, Gomi, & Noro, 2012). These studies highlighted the effectiveness of combining class-wide and individual behavioural approaches to the behaviour of the target student with special needs.

Some researchers studied the effectiveness of class-wide social-skills training (SST) in regular classrooms. For example, Ohkubo, Takahashi, and Noro (2011) conducted individual SST followed by class-wide SST. They reported that individual SST reduced the student’s inadequate behaviours, while class-wide SST maintained the learned behaviour of the student as well as improved adequate behaviours of other students in the class. On the other hand, Sekido and Tanaka (2010) suggested that class-wide SST should precede individual SST, because class-wide SST can help the classroom teacher screen their class for students needing individual intervention. Onodera (2011) reported that class-wide instruction of peers improves appropriate responding to melt-down behaviour by a Year 5 girl. After the training, the classmates changed their attitudes and reactions to the inappropriate behaviour, which then reduced the frequency of the problem behaviour.

While there has been an increasing school–university collaborative effort to study behaviour support practices in Japanese schools across Tiers 1-3, there is no formal system for implementing evidence-based practice such as ABA and PBS in Japan. It also appears that Japanese researchers and teachers are trying to blend the Western-developed evidence-based practices into their traditional framework of whole-person education by re-aligning it with value-based and group-oriented practices. The range of PBS strategies that have been investigated and trialled includes but is not limited to listed areas of research and practice:

- Functional assessment of behaviours was first used in a special education school setting in 2000 and, since then, has been used more often (Hirasawa & Fujiwara, 2000). However, this systematic assessment is not mandatory in Japanese schools and is still not practiced widely in Japanese schools (Kato & Ogasahara, 2017).
- Some studies investigated the effectiveness of using ABA and other associated strategies for classroom management in regular education classrooms for students without special needs (Sugimoto, 2015).
- Universal design based on the idea that making lessons effective to students with special needs is also beneficial for other students. Strategies have included (a) clear

learning objectives and procedures, (b) visualised learning materials, and (c) sharing of problems and thoughts (Takahashi, 2012).

- Class-wide intervention has been reported for peer-modelling (Ohkubo et al., 2011), screening of the class to identify students in need (Sekido & Tanaka, 2010), and peer-mediated support (Muranaka & Ogawa, 2016).
- TEACCH, which was first introduced to Japan in 1984 (Sasaki, 2000), attracted cultural resistance because it was different from conventional methods. However, the more successful results shown by this structured teaching, the more people accepted this practice. More recently, Japanese researchers have used this method within group social skills training for children with ASD (Ichikawa et al., 2013).
- Augmentative and alternative communication (Otani, 2005).
- SST and school-wide SST (Takemura, 2011).

Research on the effectiveness of these strategies for students is progressing, but it is piecemeal rather than systematic. These studies have highlighted the value given to these strategies by teachers in Japan. In particular, the perceived benefit of these strategies to facilitate group work with students has been and continues to be a filter for the use of these kinds of strategies. Further research is needed.

Capacity building mechanisms with lesson study

As in other countries, Japanese educational reforms have emphasised teachers' contractual, professional, and moral accountability (Hooghart, 2006). Since 2007, schools are required to conduct self-evaluation of their educational activities and operation and provide public reports (MEXT, 2002a). A *Guideline for School Evaluation* (MEXT, 2006) recommended third-party evaluation of schools conducted by professionals, who are not directly involved with the school (e.g., university professors, educational researchers, and other experienced academics). However, either many schools had yet to implement the evaluation process, or inconsistent processes have been used across schools (MEXT, 2008). When MEXT presented a plan-do-check-act model of school evaluation (i.e., PDCA cycle) to encourage schools to become more focused on school development, teachers responded to this national policy demand with intensive and advanced use of Japanese lesson study (Saito et al., 2015).

The school-wide system of lesson study and its systematised teacher-led research engagement fosters a culture of learning. A school-wide research topic is chosen by the school lesson study committee for the purpose of promoting students' long-term development, addressing national priorities, and meeting school concerns. Groups of classroom teachers across different grades and school leaders then decide on learning goals that lead to pedagogical questions relevant to their specialist curricula. Other educators such as experts from universities and senior teachers who have moved to another school can be invited to collaborate with a group. Teachers then develop a series of lessons with short- and long-term goals for individual students and for the class, and they address the questions through a cyclic process of teaching (Kikkawa, 2014):

1. A research teacher plans a lesson with other group members through study of curriculum content, development of teaching materials, and clarification of possible pedagogical strategies;
2. The research teacher teaches the lesson while other members of the group observe (directly in the classroom and indirectly using videos);
3. All members engage in group discussion to evaluate aspects of learning and teaching aspects during the lesson; and
4. The research teacher revises the lesson plan based on the evaluation of the previous lesson.

The main benefit of this school-wide approach is improvement of everyday practice as “lessons learned will become part of everyday teaching practice” (Ylonen & Norwich, 2012, p. 311). Kikkawa’s special educators working with small classes of students with special needs designed lessons around the research topic of “facilitating students’ learning satisfaction” identified by the school’s lesson study committee. The overarching school-wide topic enabled teachers and other members of the group with different expertise to think together about how their everyday teaching assists students to achieve the long-term learning goals. Their ongoing group reflection about everyday classroom interactions helped to (a) acquire a better understanding of the needs of individual students and the class and (b) prepare differentiated materials and teaching methods (Kikkawa, 2014). The lesson study committee synthesised the research findings from different disciplines (e.g., Japanese literacy, social science, special needs education) to address the research topic, which is beneficial to future practice in the school. Finally, the involvement of university professors brought insights of theories and practices beyond the school into the lesson study group and contributed to theory development.

Most Japanese lesson study is published in professional publications for internal consumption. In recent decades, there has been increasing attention to lesson study practice across many Western (e.g., USA, UK, Canada, European countries) and Asian countries (e.g., China, Singapore, and Indonesia). Most studies have been focused on teachers’ improving pedagogical knowledge and practice in the Western literature of regular education. Few studies have investigated the use of lesson study to improve teacher practice for students with special needs (Benedict et al., 2013; Ylonen & Norwich, 2012). Benedict et al. (2013) suggested that, with this process, teachers are able to (a) examine teaching and learning activities and interactions in a class, (b) reflect meaningfully on how far students are achieving content standards, (c) improve their abilities to modify instructions based on individual learning needs, and (d) implement strategies coherent across classrooms.

Strengths and weakness of current practice in Japan

A policy change to *Teacher License Renewal Policy*, established in 2007 and implemented since 2009, requires teachers to renew their teacher license every 10 years by participating in 30 contact hours of university-offered courses approved by MEXT. This reform particularly reflected the national emphasis on implementation of special needs education service to accommodate educational needs of students who were ignored in the previous educational system. Although there are few studies about professional development for

behaviour support conducted in regular education settings, some researchers since the reform have reported positive effects of professional development training for early childhood education teachers about ABA (Tanaka, Baba, Suzuki, & Tanaka-Matsumi, 2014) and for preservice teachers about functional behaviour analysis (Ohkubo, Iguchi, & Ishizuka, 2015; Ohkubo, Iguchi, & Noro, 2011).

Yoshida (2009) suggested that teachers should prioritise *shūdan dukuri* (i.e., build a class as community) for lesson planning to enable students with needs to ask for help to peers in the class. In order to do so, teachers need to analyse everyday interactions and learning activities to identify possible approaches to support both individuals and group and to accommodate individual needs during group instruction. Although his idea is aligned with lesson study, the historical review of behaviour support suggested that *shūdan* was overlooked in the earlier development of inclusive practice.

However, some researchers have tried to re-conceptualise this social-cultural approach as an alternative view of behaviour support that is different from that of Western behaviour intervention (Shijyou, 2013). Whereas ABA targets individual students with problem behaviours, the social-cultural approach requires classroom teachers to utilise naturally occurring interactions in the class to deliver a lesson to the class. Teachers seek to understand how the difficulties of the students with developmental disabilities vary in different situations with different people and to identify the best way to support these students. Moreover, Oishi (2016) highlighted two-way consultation between teachers and specialists about behavioural support that emerged from a long history of school-university partnership. That is, university academics lead consultation to assess behaviour and evaluate the outcome of behavioural interventions, and teachers implement the practice in their classrooms.

Furthermore, the Japanese view of evaluation appears to be different from the Western view. Kikkawa (2014) asked special educators to explore the meaning of outcomes and of *hyouka* or evaluation. They were focused on “holistic and critical views to see a child as a whole and a lesson moment as a whole” (Kikkawa, 2014, p. 241). Instead of gathering measurable information, these educators observed classroom interactions carefully and considered the reasons behind the students’ response to teaching. They asked themselves pedagogical questions focusing on students’ thinking and learning as well as on teachers’ teaching behaviour. While an FBA is intensive and comprehensive, their responses highlighted a metacognitive emphasis on knowing about knowing and about understanding what we understand.

Future direction

Despite an increasing number of experimental studies in school settings, no formal system has been established to implement either evidence-based practice or RTI in Japanese schools (Hirasawa, 2009). Like lesson study, political and organisational freedom given to schools contributes to the unique development of teacher work and practice in Japan. However, it also has a risk that some schools do not provide sufficient and consistent support to students with special needs. Hirasawa (2009) reviewed papers about single case studies using ABA-based behavioural interventions in Japanese schools. Since all of these

studies involved all stakeholders who actually worked with the participants in local schools and showed positive outcomes from the interventions, she suggested that these studies are important evidence that demonstrates the usefulness and effectiveness of ABA-based behavioural interventions in Japanese schools.

There has been cultural resistance from schools and teachers toward application of cognitive-focused behaviour support. For example, Sugimoto (2015), who reviewed nine studies that implemented classroom management interventions based on behaviour analysis in Japanese regular classrooms, reported that classroom teachers valued the effectiveness of interventions but felt burdened to understand the ABA theories enough to implement the intervention. Moreover, he argued that the current system of only one teacher instructing one whole class of 30 to 40 students makes it almost impossible to implement class-wide interventions that require the teacher to monitor the classroom interactions and to evaluate the progress by themselves.

To establish the school-wide system for behaviour support, active and positive partnerships between resource room teachers and mainstreaming classroom teacher need to (a) build positive relationship, (b) schedule time for sharing information, (c) improve classroom teachers' understanding of their role regarding behaviour support for students with SEN in regular classrooms, and (d) improve teachers' pedagogical skills of integrating individual support and class instruction during a lesson. It is also important to foster a positive perception of a resource room, so that students with special needs and other students value it as a place to develop strengths rather than accept their weakness (Miyashita, 2011). In particular, secondary students are less accepting because they prefer to be with peers and may need alternative classes after school. More can be done to encourage school-university partnerships because behavioural interventions are being implemented only in local schools where the researchers have personal connections or existing partnerships such as university-attached schools (Miyashita, 2011).

Furthermore, a survey conducted with school leaders, classroom teachers, and special needs education coordinators reported a desire to receive professional advice not only on how to support and instruct students with educational needs but also how to assess the needs of their student (MEXT, 2012). Lack of experience with functional behavioural assessment appeared to hinder effective transition to more systematised assessment of students with special needs: Teachers who took a professional development workshop on FBA in their own time reported difficulties in conducting the assessment in their schools as the practice, which requires a team approach, is not understood (Kato & Ogasahara, 2017).

It is recognised that poor adaptation by students with developmental disabilities into school life (e.g., behavioural risks, school refusal, being victimised) is linked to social isolation or poor adaptation in future life (Takemura, 2011). A national-wide and school-wide system of behaviour support may be helpful but has yet to navigate established cultural values and practice. However, there is increasing interest in FBA and PBS for individual students with special needs.

References

- Ball, D. L., & Forzani, F. M. (2007). What makes education research "educational"? *Educational Researcher*, 36(9), 529-540.
- Benedict, A. E., Park, Y., Brownell, M. T., Lauterbach, A. A., & Kiely, M. T. (2013). Using lesson study to align elementary literacy instruction within the RTI framework. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 45(5), 22-30.
- Chokshi, S., & Fernandez, C. (2004). Challenges to importing Japanese lesson study: Concerns, misconceptions, and nuances. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 85(7), 520-525.
- Crockett, M. D. (2007). The relationship between teaching and learning: Examining Japanese and US professional development. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 39(5), 609-621.
- Dojo, Y., Noda, W., & Sanomaru, M. (2008). Behavioral interventions in school settings for children with developmental disabilities, 1990-2005: A review. *Japanese Journal of Behavior Analysis*, 22(1), 4-16.
- Fujino, H. (2013). Current trends in research on psychosocial interventions for school-aged children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder: A review. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 51(1), 63-72.
- Fukumoto, S., & Ohkubo, K. (2013). Systematic review of intervention studies targeting behavior problems in schools. *Journal of Hokkaido University of Education, Education*, 63(2), 243-258.
- Hirasawa, N. (2009). Contributions of applied behavior analysis to support practices for persons with developmental disabilities and behavior problems: Toward evidence-based protection of their rights. *Japanese Journal of Behavior Analysis*, 23(1), 33-45.
- Hirasawa, N., & Fujiwara, Y. (2000). Support based on functional assessment to reduce aggressive behavior in a student in a high school for persons with mental handicaps: Contextual fit perspective in positive behavioral support. *Japanese Journal of Behavior Analysis*, 15(1), 4-24.
- Hooghart, A. M. (2006). Educational reform in Japan and its influence on teachers' work. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 45(4-5), 290-301.
- Ichikawa, K., Takahashi, Y., Ando, M., Anme, T., Ishizaki, T., & Yamaguchi, H. (2013). TEACCH-based group social skills training for children with high-functioning autism: a pilot randomized controlled trial. *BioPsychoSocial Medicine*, 7(1), 1-8.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2002a). *Shougakkou secchi kijyun oyobi chuugakkou secchi kijyun no settei nado ni tuite* [Notice for establishing school standards for elementary and secondary schools]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2002b). *Tsujiyou no gakkyu ni zaiseki suru tokubetsu na kyoudiku-teki shien wo hitsuyou to suru jidou seito ni taisuru zenkoku jittai chousa: Chousa kekka* [The report of

- national survey about children and students with educational needs in regular classrooms]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2006). *Gakkou hyouka: Monbukagakushou "Gakkou hyouka guideline" yori* [School Evaluation: From MEXT's guideline]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2007). *Gakkoukyouikuhou shikou kisoku no ichibu kaisei ni tsuite: Tsuuchi* [The outline of partial amendment to Regulation of Operating School Education Law]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2008). *Gakkouhyouka guideline* [Guideline for school evaluation]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology. (2012). *Tsujiyou no gakkyu ni zaiseki-suru hattatsushougai no kanousei no aru tokubetsuna kyoutekishien wo hitsuyou to suru jidou-seito ni kansuru chousa-kekka ni tsuite* [Survey of children and students who may have developmental disabilities requiring special educational support at regular education classrooms]. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare. (2011). *Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities*. Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Japanese Ministry of Health Labour, and Welfare. (2004). *Hattatsu-shougai-sha shienhou* [Law to Support Persons with Developmental Disabilities] (Law number 167 of 2004). Tokyo, Japan: Author.
- Kato, S., & Ogasahara, K. (2017). Difficulties faced by teachers at special schools when implementing interventions for behavior problems. *Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 54(5), 283-291.
- Kawamura, S. (2005). *Kokoga point gakkyu tannin no tokubetsu-shien-kyouiku: Kobetsushien to issei-shidou wo ipponka suru gakkyu-keiei* [Key points for classroom teachers' special needs education: Class management for integrating individualised support and group instruction]. Tokyo, Japan: Toshobunka.
- Kikkawa, Y. (2014). *Daily practice, group instruction, and valued outcomes: Japanese and Australian case studies of special educators teaching children with ASD* (doctoral dissertation). Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.
- Kikkawa, Y., & Bryer, F. (2013). Working together: Insights from a special education unit in Japan. *Special Education Perspectives*, 22(1), 35-47.
- Koegel, R. L., & Koegel, L. K. (2006). *Pivotal response treatment for autism*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- Lewis, C. (2016). How does lesson study improve mathematics instruction? *International Journal on Mathematics Education*, 48(4), 571-580.
- Lewis, C., Perry, R., & Friedkin, S. (2009). Lesson study as action research. In S. E. Noffke & B. Somekh (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of educational action research* (pp. 143-154). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- Matoba, M., & Sarkar Arani, M. R. (2006). Ethnography for teachers' professional development: Japanese approach of investigation on classroom activities. In N. Popov, C. Wolhuter, C. Heller, & M. Kysilka (Eds.), *Comparative education in teacher training* (Vol. 4, pp. 116-125). Sofia, Bulgaria: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society & Bureau for Educational Services.
- Matoba, M., Shibata, Y., & Sarkar Arani, M. R. (2007). School-university partnerships: A new recipe for creating professional knowledge in school. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 6, 55-65.
- Miyashita, T. (2011). Review of behavioural analysis approaches at schools: Studies conducted within and outside Japan. *Bulletin of the School of Education, Bukkyo University*, 10, 45-54.
- Muranaka, T., & Ogawa, A. (2016). Class-wide intervention: Class preparation behavior of children with special needs. *Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 54(4), 223-232.
- Ohkubo, K., Iguchi, T., & Ishizuka, M. (2015). Effects of a program for training individuals to conduct functional behavioral assessments: Analyses of information gathering and designing of behavior support plans by participants. *Japanese Journal of Behavior Analysis*, 29(2), 68-85.
- Ohkubo, K., Iguchi, T., & Noro, F. (2011). Effects of staff training for functional assessment to behavioral problems of students. *Journal of Hokkaido University of Education*, 61(2), 77-88.
- Ohkubo, K., Takahashi, N., & Noro, F. (2011). Effects of behavioral support on participation in routine classroom activities: Support for an individual pupil and for the class as a whole. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 48(5), 383-394. doi: 10.6033/tokkyou.48.383
- Oishi, K. (2016). Behavioral consultation in Japan : A review of trends in research and practice on supporting children with developmental disabilities in schools. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 54(1), 47-56.
- Okada, S., Goto, H., & Ueno, K. (2005). Instructions of social skills for students with Asperger syndrome: Focused on social cognition and skill buildings. *Japanese Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 14(2), 153-162.
- Okamoto, K. (2014). Collaborative methods of instruction and support for students with developmental disabilities who exhibit behavioral problems in school: Current trends and issues. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 52(3), 217-227.
- Okitsu, T., & Sekido, H. (2007). Support based on functional assessment for children having difficulty participating in regular classes. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 44(5), 315-325.
- Otani, H. (2005). Use of AAC for instructing self-management activities for a child with ASD. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 43(4), 321-331.
- Saito, E., Watanabe, M., Gillies, R., Someya, I., Nagashima, T., Sato, M., & Murase, M. (2015). School reform for positive behaviour support through collaborative

- learning: Utilising lesson study for a learning community. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 45(4), 489-518.
- Sarkar Arani, M. R., & Matoba, M. (2006). Challenges in Japanese teachers' professional development: A focus on an alternative perspective. In N. Popov, C. Wolhuter, C. Heller, & M. Kysilka (Eds.), *Comparative education in teacher training* (Vol. 4, pp. 107-115). Sofia, Bulgaria: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society & Bureau for Educational Services.
- Sasaki, M. (2000). Aspects of autism in Japan before and after the introduction of TEACCH. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 29(2), 3-18.
- Sekido, H., & Tanaka, M. (2010). Positive behavior support for a student with problem behavior in a regular classroom : Individualized support together with a class-wide behavioral intervention. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 48(2), 135-146.
- Shijyou, K. (2013). Review of studies on support for children with developmental disabilities in mainstream classrooms. *Bulletin of Japanese National Institute of Special Needs Education*, 40, 97-108.
- Sugimoto, T. (2015). Classroom management based on behavior analysis in Japan: Review of practice research in elementary school regular class. *Bulletin of Nihon University Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies*, 16, 55-64.
- Takahashi, F. (2012). The method of universal-design for problem-solving instructions: For creating a lesson for understanding in mathematics. *Bulletin of Graduate School of Teacher Training Yamagata University*, 3, 254-257.
- Takemura, Y. (2011). Behavioral assessment and treatment of interactions of pupils with "problem behavior" and their teachers and peers in general classrooms: Current issues. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 49(4), 415-424.
- Tanaka, Y., Baba, C., Suzuki, H., & Tanaka-Matsumi, J. (2014). Pervasive positive effects of an applied behavior analysis workshop for nursery school supervising teachers on the supervisee teachers and the children: Increasing praise for positive behavior. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 52(3), 169-179.
- Tsurumi, N., Gomi, Y., & Noro, F. (2012). Promoting preparations for lunchtime and peer interactions among pupils in a regular classroom: Effects of interdependent group-oriented contingencies. *The Japanese Journal of Special Education*, 50(2), 129-139.
- Wakui, M. (2007). We need more action research in schools: Group, organizational, and social contingencies as conceptual tools. *Japanese Journal of Behavior Analysis*, 21(1), 30-34.
- Ylonen, A., & Norwich, B. (2012). Using lesson study to develop teaching approaches for secondary school pupils with moderate learning difficulties: Teachers' concepts, attitudes and pedagogic strategies. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 27(3), 301-317.

Yoshida, S. (2009). The research tasks on the teaching-learning process in special support education: Focusing on the teaching-learning process in regular class. *Research Bulletin of Takamatsu University*, 51, 117-128.

Authors' Copy