



Social background problems in recent Japan:

- Lack of play for children
- It is required to **cultivate a play** because children can not **play in its nature**.
- eg. Exchange cards among boys.

Lack of social network for children and their parents

It is difficult to find a peer partner to play for any child. Parents can not talk their children's matters with the other adults.

It requires to **organize children's everyday activity**. "**After-school programs**" may be resources for the organization. (cf. Takashi Miyazaki's presentation)

Two aspects of <KODOMO> project
children

- 1. It is **Play Study!**
- observing and constructing play
- 2. It cultivates **Social Network**.
- Connection among University stuffs, students, and preschool teachers.
- Connection between various kinds of adults and different ages of children.

Rough sketch of Kodomo project

- It starts from last October.
- Ishiguro-lab organizes Kodomo Project collaborating with Miharu Preschool.
- Activity
- It held **Play-shops (PS*)** eight times in this fall term.
- ***Coinage to be contrast with "Work"shop**
- PS takes place from 3:30 to 5:30 once a week on Monday.
- PS is set after school in preschool for children in afternoon day care.
- PS class is one for children aged three to six.

Who participate into Play-shops?

Supervisors

- Ishiguro, Hiroaki (Hokkaido University)
- Azuma, Shigemitsu (schoolmaster of Miharu preschool)

Nursery teachers of Miharu preschool

- Matumoto, Maki (Mgr. & **Teacher in charge for this project**)
- **All other teachers** participate in PS in rotation.

Students as Volunteer

Researcher/Volunteers (Hasegawa, M., Ikegami, Ai, Uchida, S. and others: Students affiliated with Ishiguro-lab)

Just plain volunteers (Undergraduates of Hokkaido Univ. and other nearby ones)

Children in Miharu Preschool

About 15 **Children aged three to six** participate into one PS.

Theoretical Background:
Vygotskian approach to **play**

- Based on Vygotsky, Leont'ev & El'konin
- 1. They do not focus the effect of short intervention but **long experimental social practice**. (not only change but **development**) (cf. "Psychology of Play" of El'konin, D.)
- 2. Play is **leading activity** in preschool period because "play makes zone of proximal development for children (cf. Vygotsky, L.S.)".
- 3. Adults can not control children's play directly but **set the environment to play indirectly**. (cf. El'konin, D. also Vygotsky's "method of double stimuli")
- 4. Play is defined as **the activity to reproduce social nature (role) of people's activity**. (cf. El'konin, D.)

Theoretical Issues for play: Our interests

- Transformation of object/motive is key to understand the development of play.
- Negotiation of object between children and adults is an important occasion to extend Zo-ped. (Hakkarainen,1999).
- A role or an action belonging to a role is a unit of analysis because it can integrate all other elements of play (El'konin, 1960).
- Under the view of "upper (developed) to lower (developing or destructing) (Marx,K.)", play is only served as a preparation or a practice for the children's perfection in the future. We should also consider a significance of pleasure in the present for the children. Designing an environment to play should correspond to the children's motive at the time.
- Beyond three age, there is a contradiction between their motive for independence and their motive for cooperation with adults. It causes a fictional world for children.

Trajectory of Play-Shops: Preliminary period (Oct. to Dec., 2003)

- Activities * See the detail in the paper.
- Group race in the nearby park.
 - Drawing collaboratively.
 - Making houses and equipments with waste articles (cardboards, cartons of milk and so on) and play with them.
- Main results
- Almost of children can concentrate their attention on making and playing.
 - They could use materials as if they be something another and pretended to be someone, but there were not an extended play base in social roles.
 - The quality of volunteers to assist children in playing is critical to one of play.
 - Volunteers themselves can be healed through PS with children.

Trajectory of Play-Shops: Second period (Jan. to Mar., 2004)

- Setting an environment for the role centered play.
- From 19th, Jan, 2004
- Theme: Making Miharu Department store.
- Steps:
 - (1) Discussing a department stores
 - (2) Choosing one of shops and Writing the signboard for it.
 - (3) Grouping and Making objects relating to the shop.
- The followings are expected.
 - (4) Playing with them.
 - (5) Revising (1)-(2)-(3)-(4) and extending the department connected worlds

Discussing department store

- Do you know a department store?
- I know it.
- Have you been there? Yes.
- What kinds of shop are there?
- Bakery.
- Who makes it?
- An elder man, a young man
- Where are they?
- A factory
- How is it transported?
- By Trucks
- (Reduced rough transcript)
- From Shop-nomination to Commercial structures (sales – transportation – production)



Choosing one of shops

- Choosing stores to make and pretend with, then grouping corresponding to them with a volunteer/student.
- Writing a store name in a signboard.



Making goods

- Making goods in each groups.
- They are making earrings, artificial nails, and so on.
- She is dressing letters goods shop (pretty) fitting for the shop "Kawaii (pretty) –mono (goods) - ya(store)" in the signboard.



Play will be extended from now on

- Playing with objects produced.
- Connecting to various industries and any customers



Related issues in the future

- Development of play from role-play to drama one. (cf. Fujino's presentation)
- Study on the relation between Work and Play.
- Study on the between Art and Play.
- Study on volunteer's development.
- Study on the social network for children.