

Educational Needs in Group Therapy for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Analyses of Picture Books Reading Situations -

NODA Yasuyo

Graduate School of Science for Human Service, Ritsumeikan University

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This study involved the observation of “picture book reading” situations in group therapy in order to examine developmental changes in children with Autism spectrum disorders.

Two boys were targeted from among participants in the school-age group of the treatment and education program. Observations were made during picture book reading situations in the program and recorded by video-recorder.

Results showed that one boy (A) verbalized the content of drawings and found some humor in each scene at the early stages. Later, however, boy A was increasingly apt to ask what would happen next and to press the reader to continue. The other boy, boy (B), talked to the reader alone while behaving as if he were a reader at the early stages. However, he gradually came to talk to other staff nearby. Thereafter, he was willing to join in enjoyable activities with the other children.

These results show the developmental changes for A in understanding picture books, and those for B in his relationship with the other children. Additionally, the need for educators to join the group of children to help them interact with one another while sharing the same themes or goals was suggested.