

Studies on Children and Computers: The 1993-94 Fulbright Series

Trans-cultural research findings and measurement issues

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Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the special encouragement provided by Dr. Kathleen Holmes, former Associate Director of the Texas Center for Educational Technology and Acting Executive Director at the time the decision was made to produce this booklet. Dr. Holmes took personal responsibility for finding appropriate bilingual Hispanic schools to include in the YCCI Project for 1992 and 1993. She was also the principal supporter of the attempt to expand and modify the original YCCI Questionnaire for use at the middle school level, in 1993. Without her enthusiasm, many person-months of productive research in Hawaii, Japan, and Texas would have remained out of print.

Special thanks are also due to Mr. Pijarn Charoensri and Ms. Savanee Bangpipob, who in addition to serving as cover designer and layout editor, also supported the dual U.S.-Japanese operating systems required to produce camera ready documents.

And, finally, a belated word of thanks is due to the numerous parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents who allocated time from their own and their children's school days to gather the data required for this project.

Preface

This booklet contains nine papers written during the final year of a 4-year longitudinal study of the psychological impact of school computer use on young children.

During the past four years, the Young Children's Computer Inventory Project has analyzed self-report responses from approximately 3000 children in grades 1-4 (and beyond) on six psychological dispositions: Computer Importance, Computer Enjoyment, Motivation/Persistence, Study Habits, Empathy, and Creative Tendencies. The primary goal was to compare data from computer-using students in Japan to data from students not using computers in Japan, while using data from students in the U.S.A. and Mexico as time-synchronized controls. Although data sources over the years have included native English-Speaking students in the U.S., native Japanese-speaking students in Japan, native Spanish-speaking students in Mexico, Japanese students living abroad in the U.S., and bilingual Hispanic students in the U.S., no data from students in Mexico was included in the 1993 collection which formed the basis of the 1993-94 reports.

The 1993-94 series can be divided into two categories of papers: a) research findings, and b) measurement issues. Included in the first category are three technical reports covering associations of YCCI dispositions with background variables, global differences among the eight 1993 YCCI test sites, and probable causal relations in the YCCI data. A conference paper focusing on the characteristics of American and Japanese children residing in Hawaii, is included as well. In the area of measurement issues are four technical reports about response descriptors, test-retest reliability, and language and culture bias; plus a conference paper proposing additions to the Young Children's Computer Inventory instrument (YCCI) for use with middle school students in grades 4-8.

Many of these papers are believed to be worthy of publication in refereed journals, but none have been submitted to date. The goal for the final year has been one of finishing the required analyses so that the researchers can complete a final report and pursue a book about the findings in a timely fashion.

All papers in this booklet were begun, and most were completed, during G. Knezek's Fulbright appointment to the Tokyo Institute of Technology during the summer of 1993, and/or his professional development leave to the University of Hawaii during the fall of 1993. All of the papers in this series were planned and produced in conjunction with Dr. Keiko Miyashita of the Tokyo Institute of Technology and Dr. Takashi Sakamoto of the National Center for University Entrance Examinations in Japan. The Hawaii paper was co-authored by Dr. Morris Lai and Mr. John Southworth of the University of Hawaii, while the technical report exploring causal relations was developed under the guidance of Dr. Akira Sakamoto of Ochanomizu University, Japan.

Credit is certainly due to the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (Fulbright-U.S.A.), the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission (Fulbright-Japan), and the University of North Texas Office of the Provost for supporting this research. Credit should also be given to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, which funded co-collaborator Miyashita's two-year postdoctoral appointment to the Tokyo Institute of Technology, as well as to the National Center for University Entrance Examinations in Japan, which generously provided meeting space and co-collaborator Sakamoto's time, and to the Texas Center for Educational Technology which has provided research assistant and publication support all four years of this project. Finally, special credit is due to the Meadows Foundation of Dallas, Texas, which twice during the initial years supported the foundation studies that made all the others possible.

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April 1994

