Original Article

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Individual Teaching Plans in Elementary School: Semantic Differential

Ayano IKEDA and Takao ANDO

The purpose of the present study was to investigate attitudes of teachers in elementary schools toward individual teaching plans (ITP). In order to evaluate teachers' attitudes, elementary school teachers' image of individual teaching plans was investigated using the semantic differential (SD) technique. The following analyses were performed: (a) a factor analysis using the semantic differential scores for individual teaching plans, and (b) a correspondence analysis using the semantic differential scale ratings for 6 concepts: science, Japanese language, period for integrated study, individual teaching plans, *jiritsu katsudo* (a specialized subject area in the national curriculum for special schools that has the objective of teaching pupils with disabilities to respect basic human behavior) and diagnostic evaluation. Useable data were obtained on questionnaires from 169 teachers from 12 elementary schools. The factor analysis revealed a 3-factor solution: "importance and essence", "expectations after designing individual teaching plans", and "evaluation of procedures". The correspondence analysis revealed that the teachers' images of terms connected with special education were confused, and that the teachers had an image of burden for individual teaching plans. That may be a cause of negative attitudes toward teaching pupils with disabilities in regular classes. Additional study is needed in order to make individual teaching plans in regular classes more effective in elementary schools.

Key Words: individual teaching plans, attitudes, image, semantic differential technique, elementary school teachers

Introduction

Individual Teaching Plans (ITP), which were introduced in the special schools in Japan in 1999, have enhanced the quality of education for pupils with disabilities by improving instruction for individuals (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2003). Individual teaching plans are intended to provide each pupil with a disability-appropriate education; they include teaching objectives, content, and methods. The procedures for providing

Graduate School of Comprehensive Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba

individual teaching plans are (a) assessing each pupil with a disability, (b) establishing teaching objectives, (c) deciding on concrete teaching contents, and (d) selecting teaching methods. Classroom teachers of pupils with disabilities design the individual teaching plans in most cases, because teachers know their own pupils better than others do (Ando, 2001).

Similarly, individualized education programs (IEP) have been used in regular schools in the U.S.A. as a tool for assisting pupils with disabilities to get an appropriate education. Individualized education programs, which are mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are designed to meet the educational needs of pupils with disabilities. Two differences between individual teaching plans and individualized education programs are the team that designs the individual teaching plans and individualized education programs, and the relationship of the designer of the plans or programs to the parents of the pupils with disabilities. Teachers in Japan who have designed individual teaching plans are supposed to explain to each child's parents about the individual teaching plan that has been prepared, whereas teachers in the U.S.A. who are developing individualized education programs are supposed to design them together with each pupil's parents. The members of the team developing individualized education programs, that is, the principal of the school and or institution, special education teachers, counselors, teachers appointed to prepare training programs, teachers of each pupil's classes, teachers of each course, the pupil's parents, and the pupil (Coşkun, 2010), participate as a team in designing the individualized education programs. In contrast, individual teaching plans are designed by the teacher who has primary responsibility for each pupil with disabilities.

The elementary school curriculum in Japan (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2008) requires a systematic, periodic enhancement of the instruction methods for individual pupils and the curricula of their classes. In particular, the curriculum suggests that teachers should design individual teaching plans for pupils with disabilities who are in regular classes, utilizing advice and support from special schools. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2011) indicated that, in 2010, 88.2% of elementary schools reported that their teachers were designing individual teaching plans.

In Japan, since Special Needs Education started in 2007, pupils with disabilities have received appropriate education in regular classes, special classes, or special schools. Because teachers of regular classes have little experience teaching pupils with disabilities, they may be nervous and may find it difficult to design an individual teaching plan for a student with a disability in their class (Katagiri & Murohashi, 2008).

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) found that many teachers of regular classes indicated that although inclusion could provide some benefits, they did not have sufficient time to formulate teaching plans because of the high routine work load for regular classes. Preparing individual teaching plans could be a second

or lower priority for regular class teachers. Furthermore, if teachers think that designing individual teaching plans is troublesome, it might cause them mental stress. In this context, the attitude that teachers of regular classes have about individual teaching plans is an important issue.

However, because designing individual teaching plans for students with disabilities who are in regular classes has just started in Japan, it is difficult to obtain information on teachers' attitudes toward individual teaching plans.

Akido (1970) defined "image" as one of the parameters of a preparatory state. Images are unstable and are short-term events, unlike attitudes. Images, in this view, are unconscious, inconsistent, extremely ambiguous, vague, and emotional. Kikuchi (1962) has emphasized the importance of conducting research on image.

Because attitudes reflect people's images (Ahlborn, Panek, & Jungers, 2008; Akido, 1970), studying images helps in the investigation of attitudes about individual teaching plans. It has been noted that the quality of individual teaching plans is strongly affected by the image that teachers have of individual teaching plans (Muranaka, Kasahara, Fujii, & Ando, 2001).

The present study analyzed the image that teachers have of individual teaching plans. The Semantic Differential (SD) technique with semantic differential scales was used to investigate teachers' attitudes, with the long-range goal of enhancing the quality of individual teaching plans.

Method

The methodology used for the present study was based on the semantic differential technique, which has been shown to be effective for analyzing attitudes, perception, and connotative meaning (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). This technique has proved useful for quantifying highly subjective data. The combination of the semantic differential technique and semantic differential scales obtains information from participants in a systematic and usable form (Evans, 1970).

The procedure for using the semantic differential technique in the present study is as follows:

- 1) Select concepts for evaluating the image that teachers have of individual teaching plans. Six concepts were selected: science, Japanese language, period for integrated study¹⁾, individual teaching plans, *jiritsu katsudo*²⁾, and diagnostic evaluation³⁾.
- 2) Generate semantic differential scales for analyzing the image. Twenty-two adjective scales were generated, and were counterbalanced, using bipolar adjective pairs.
- 3) Generate a questionnaire based on the semantic differential scale.
- 4) Send questionnaires to the participants.
- 5) Analyze the data.

Concepts

In the present study, six concepts were selected in order to understand teachers' images of individual teaching plans (Muranaka et al., 2001). A comparison of teachers' image of individual teaching plans and the other five concepts relating to teachers' daily tasks was intended to reveal teachers' attitudes toward individual teaching plans. The five concepts, which were related to actual school life, were selected from terms that were familiar or unfamiliar to elementary school teachers. Three of the concepts, science, Japanese language, and period for integrated study, were selected because they were familiar to the participants, and two of the concepts, *jiritsu katsudo* and diagnostic evaluation, were selected because they were unfamiliar terms and yet were related to individual teaching plans.

Semantic Differential Scales

Semantic differential scales are made up of bipolar adjective pairs, scored on a 7-point scale. Participants are instructed to use these scales to evaluate given concepts.

In the present study, first, 57 teachers from both regular and special classes in 3 elementary schools were asked to review 3 of the 6 selected concepts and to list as many adjectives as possible related to those concepts. The response rate to this request was 78.9% (45 of 57).

The number of adjectives that more than three teachers listed was 40 (10 for science, 8 for Japanese language, 5 for period for integrated study, 6 for individual teaching plans, 5 for *jiritsu katsudo*, and 6 for diagnostic evaluation). After overlapping adjectives were excluded, 22 adjectives were selected for the semantic differential scales to be used in the present study.

Second, adjectives opposite to the 22 adjectives were solicited from 3 teachers working in special schools. The teachers were informed that there were no right answers, and that the opposite words should be ones that were used in actual school life.

On the basis of the replies from those 3 teachers, the following 22 adjective pairs were generated (in the research, they were counterbalanced): detail-rough, still-moving, poor-well, untroubled-troubled, general-individual, interesting-uninteresting, fundamental-developing, active-passive, impressive-unimpressive, unnecessary-necessary, crude-thorough, concrete-abstract, impatient-patient, approximate-minute, familiar-unfamiliar, important-unimportant, hard-light, careless-careful, difficult-easy, happy-unhappy, planned-unplanned, and inconvenient-convenient.

Scoring

Each of the adjective pairs was rated on a scale from 1 to 7. The lower numbers (1 to 3) meant that the concept reviewed had an image closer to the word on the left side of the pair, whereas the larger numbers (5 to 7) indicated

that the concept fit the right word of the pair better. A score of 4 meant either a neutral image or one with an equal image on the two adjectives in the pair.

The ratings for individual teaching plans were used in a factor analysis. Osgood et al. (1957) found three factors, Evaluation, Potency, and Activity, that could be abstracted from concepts investigated with the semantic differential. Evans (1970) showed that other factors could also be obtained by this method.

In the present study, a factor analysis was performed to identify factors for the six concepts in order to obtain a view of the image that elementary school teachers have of individual teaching plans. This image could be used to understand teachers' attitudes toward individual teaching plans and to enhance the individual teaching plans themselves.

Participants

Questionnaires, including the 22 scales with counterbalanced bipolar adjective pairs, were mailed to each school. The principal or vice principal of the school handed them out to the teachers, and, after the instruments had been completed, collected them and returned them to the researchers.

The questionnaires were distributed to 164 regular-class teachers and 18 special-class teachers in 12 elementary schools.

A letter accompanied the questionnaires, stating that the teachers were not obliged to participate and that their anonymity was guaranteed. The nature and purpose of the present study was also explained in the letter.

The letter also contained the following instructions to the respondents: "Please give your intuitive impression of each of the 3 concepts on the 22 adjective pairs, marking a circle on the place on the line between 1 and 7 that represents your image. Do not think too seriously about your answers. There are no right or wrong answers on this test."

Questionnaire

The present study followed the standard procedures of the semantic differential technique as proposed by Panek and Smith (2005). The questionnaire consisted of the 22 counterbalanced adjective pairs for each of the 6 concepts, with a separate page for each concept. The name of one of the concepts was given at the top of each page, and the 22 seven-point semantic differential scales were listed underneath that.

All participants rated 3 of the 6 concepts (individual teaching plans and 2 others that were selected randomly from the remaining 5 concepts). This was done because it was difficult for busy elementary school teachers to have the time to rate all 6 concepts. It took teachers less than 15 minutes to rate 3 concepts. Out of the initial 182 teachers who were given the questionnaires, 169 returned completed questionnaires (response rate of 92.9%).

Analysis

The following analyses were performed: (a) a factor analysis using the semantic differential scores for individual teaching plans, and (b) a correspondence analysis using the semantic differential scale ratings for all 6 concepts, including individual teaching plans.

Results

Information About the Participants

The respondents who returned useable data included 169 teachers, 48 males and 121 females. The mean age of the participants was 44.5 years ($SD=8.5$); the mean number of years of teaching experience was 20.0 ($SD=9.3$). The number of regular class teachers was 150 (88.8%); there were 15 special class teachers (8.9%). Four of the teachers did not answer the question as to the type of class they taught.

Asked about their experience teaching special classes (including at special schools), 22 teachers (13.0%) indicated that they had had such experience, whereas 147 teachers (87.0%) had not.

Asked “Have you ever heard the words ‘individual teaching plans?’”, 159 participants (94.1%) answered “yes”, and 10 (5.9%) answered “no”. Of 159 teachers who responded to the question as to whether they could explain the contents of individual teaching plans, 14 (8.8%) answered that they could not, 45 (28.3%) reported that they had no confidence to explain, and 81 (50.9%) that they could explain some of the contents. Only 19 teachers (11.9%) answered that they could explain individual teaching plans well (see Fig. 1).

To the question “To what extent have you participated in designing individual teaching plans?”, 49 teachers (30.8%) answered “not at all”, 32 (20.1%)

FIG. 1 Information About Participants

Teachers' Attitudes Toward ITP

TABLE 1 Means and Standard Deviation for the 22 Scales of Individual Teaching Plans

	Scales	Means	SD
1	Detail-Rough	2.40	1.04
2	Still-Moving	4.30	1.06
3	Poor-Well	3.74	0.97
4	Untroubled-Troubled	5.03	1.00
5	General-Individual	6.05	1.13
6	Interesting-Uninteresting	3.87	0.93
7	Fundamental-Developing	3.26	1.36
8	Active-Passive	3.52	1.15
9	Impressive-Unimpressive	4.37	0.94
10	Unnecessary-Necessary	5.88	1.00
11	Crude-Thorough	5.83	1.01
12	Concrete-Abstract	2.25	1.22
13	Impatient-Patient	5.06	1.14
14	Approximate-Minute	5.72	1.17
15	Familiar-Unfamiliar	3.21	1.37
16	Important-Unimportant	2.13	0.91
17	Hard-Light	2.64	1.14
18	Careless-Careful	5.64	1.12
19	Difficult-Easy	3.15	1.32
20	Happy-Unhappy	4.19	1.09
21	Planned-Unplanned	2.08	1.00
22	Inconvenient-Convenient	4.03	0.96

“seldom”, 53 (33.3%) “some” and 25 (15.7%) “much” (see Fig. 1). Almost 50% of the participants answered that they had contributed to designing individual teaching plans.

Factor Analysis

The means and standard deviations for the 22 semantic differential scales are shown in Table 1. In Table 1, the lower numbers (1 to 3) indicate that the image of the concept reviewed is closer to the word on the left, whereas the higher numbers (5 to 7) indicate that the participants' image of the concept fit better with the word on the right of the pair.

In order to analyze the image that teachers have of designing individual teaching plans, data from the 159 participants who indicated that they had heard the words “individual teaching plans” were used. However, ten of those 159 were eliminated because the participants did not answer the questionnaire completely. Thus, the effective number of questionnaires used for this part of the analysis is 149 (88.2% of the original sample).

In the initial principal method factor analysis, 4 scales with single-factor load-

TABLE 2 Results of the Factor Analysis

		I	II	III
I	Importance and essence ($\alpha=.88$)			
14	Approximate-Minute	.837	-.015	-.015
18	Careless-Careful	.783	-.194	.029
10	Unnecessary-Necessary	.722	.117	.153
11	Crude-Thorough	.714	.072	-.154
16	Important-Unimportant	-.705	-.081	-.058
12	Concrete-Abstract	-.641	.05	-.081
21	Planned-Unplanned	-.617	-.086	-.028
1	Detail-Rough	-.492	.062	.298
II	Expectations after designing individual teaching plans ($\alpha=.77$)			
9	Impressive-Unimpressive	.079	.732	-.159
22	Inconvenient-Convenient	.065	.653	.077
20	Happy-Unhappy	.051	-.542	-.158
3	Poor-Well	-.009	.539	.176
8	Active-Passive	-.058	-.526	.153
2	Still-Moving	-.066	.496	-.245
19	Difficult-Easy	-.072	.467	.339
6	Interesting-Uninteresting	.003	-.403	.001
III	Evaluations of procedures ($\alpha=.70$)			
17	Hard-Light	.061	-.182	.891
4	Untroubled-Troubled	-.036	-.047	-.722
Factor correlation mat				
	II	.108		
	III	-.449	.372	

ing less than .45 were deleted, leaving 18 scales. On the basis of the expected correlation of the factors, a promax rotation was used for the exploratory analysis. After each factor structure was explored, it was determined that a 3-factor solution was the most appropriate and interpretable.

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 2. After the analysis, the 3 factors that were detected were named by a professor, a graduate student, and a researcher, all of whom were studying special education at the graduate school level, following a discussion.

Factor I included the following 8 items: "Approximate-Minute", "Careless-Careful", "Unnecessary-Necessary", "Crude-Thorough", "Important-Unimportant", "Concrete-Abstract", "Planned-Unplanned", and "Detail-Rough". This group was named "importance and essence" because it includes items that reflect the importance and essence of the individual teaching plans.

Factor II included the following 8 items: "Impressive-Unimpressive", "Inconvenient-Free", "Happy-Unhappy", "Poor-Well", "Active-Passive", "Still-Moving", "Difficult-Easy", and "Interesting-Uninteresting". Factor II includes

items that reflect teachers' expectations of an improvement after they had generated individual teaching plans, and was named "expectations after designing individual teaching plans".

Factor III included the following 2 items: "Hard-Light" and "Untroubled-Troubled". This was named "evaluation of procedures" because it included items that reflected the teachers' evaluation of how to design individual teaching plans.

These 3 factors accounted for 54.1% of the explained variance. To evaluate the reliability of the scales, Cronbach's α was calculated for the 3 factors, with the following results: Factor I, $\alpha = .88$; Factor II, $\alpha = .77$; and Factor III, $\alpha = .70$. Factor III included only 2 items, but, even so, Cronbach's α ranged from .70 to .88, indicating that the reliability of the scales was good. The commonly used rule of thumb is that α exceeding .70 indicates acceptable internal consistency for a scale (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978).

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine the teachers' reports of their ability to explain individual teaching plans (4 possible responses: could not, no confidence, some, and well), and the extent of their past participation in the design of individual teaching plans (4 possible responses: not at all, seldom, some, and much). The number of teachers in each of these groups was, for the question on ability to explain individual teaching plans, 13 (8.7%), 39 (26.2%), 78 (52.3%), and 19 (12.8%) respectively, and, on the question about their past participation in the design of individual teaching plans, 45 (30.2%), 29 (19.5%), 51 (34.2%), and 24 (16.1%) respectively.

Analysis of Factor III, "evaluation of procedures", revealed a significant main effect of how often the teachers had participated in designing individual teaching plans, $F(3, 145) = 2.687, p < 0.05$. Multiple comparisons (Tukey's HSD test) revealed that the scores of the teachers who had seldom contributed to the design of individual teaching plans were significantly lower than those of the teachers who had had some participation in designing the individual teaching plans. Analysis of the other scales did not reveal a significant effect of how well the teachers felt they could explain individual teaching plans, or of the extent of their participation in the design of individual teaching plans.

Correspondence Analysis

Correspondence analysis is often used in image studies in order to explore the extent of association between destinations and attributes (Whitlark & Smith, 2001). In order to be able to display the association of attributes through a compelling visual representation, correspondence analysis can be used to reduce multidimensional frequency data to a 2-dimensional map. In the present study, a correspondence map was used to investigate the association of the teachers' images of the 6 concepts. The frequency of emergence of the 44 adjectives used in the semantic differential was calculated for each concept. The results indicated that 12 of the 44 adjectives were not selected as preferred words for the concept being evaluated by more than 80% of respondents. These 12 adjectives

TABLE 3 Words Used in the Correspondence Analysis

1	Detail	17	Necessary
2	Rough	18	Thorough
3	Still	19	Concrete
4	Moving	20	Abstract
5	Poor	21	Patient
6	Well	22	Approximate
7	Trouble	23	Minute
8	General	24	Familiar
9	Individual	25	Important
10	Interesting	26	Hard
11	Fundamental	27	Careful
12	Developing	28	Difficult
13	Active	29	Happy
14	Passive	30	Unhappy
15	Impressive	31	Planned
16	Unnecessary	32	Convenient

were eliminated from the correspondence analysis (see Table 3 for a list of the remaining 32 adjectives).

In the correspondence analysis, the abscissa accounted for 60.8% (Dimension 1) and the ordinate for 19.4% (Dimension 2). It was determined that the association of the images could be mostly explained by Dimensions 1 and 2 (80.2%). The resulting 2-dimensional map is presented in Fig. 2.

In addition, a hierarchical cluster analysis (squared Euclidean distance, Ward's method) was used to classify the 6 concepts and remaining 32 adjectives (see Fig. 3).

As shown in Fig. 3, adjectives classified in the same cluster as the "science" concept were "Poor", "Well", "Interesting", "Impressive", "Familiar", "Difficult", "Happy", and "Free". Adjectives classified in the same cluster as the "Japanese language" concept were "Still", "Passive", and "Abstract". Adjectives classified in the same cluster as the "period for integrated study" concept were "Moving", "Troubled", and "Active". Adjectives classified in the same cluster as the "individual teaching plans", "*jiritsu katsudo*", and "diagnostic evaluation" concepts were "Detail", "Individual", "Fundamental", "Necessary", "Thorough", "Concrete", "Patient", "Minute", "Important", "Hard", "Care", "Unhappy" and "Planned".

The words that were classified in the same cluster as special education, which were "individual teaching plans", "*jiritsu katsudo*", and "diagnostic evaluation", were "Detail", "Necessary", "Minute", "Concrete", "Important". They were classified in the "importance and essence" factor of individual teaching plans.

Discussion

Factor Analysis

The factor analysis revealed 3 factors for the image that teachers have of individual teaching plans, specifically, Factor I: “importance and essence,” Factor II: “expectations after designing individual teaching plans,” and Factor III: “evaluation of procedures”.

A one-way ANOVA revealed that the scores of the teachers who had seldom participated in designing individual teaching plans were significantly lower than the scores of those teachers who had some such participation.

In order to use the individual teaching plan process effectively, it is important that each school prepare a system for designing individual teaching plans (Chikurinji & Higo, 2003), so that teachers who have to participate in designing individual teaching plans understand the importance of the procedures involved in designing individual teaching plans.

FIG. 2 Results of the Correspondence Analysis

Correspondence Analysis

This analysis showed that the elementary school teachers who participated in the present study had a concrete image of concepts representing the subjects science, Japanese language, and period for integrated study. On the other hand, they had only a vague image of concepts connected with special education, specifically, individual teaching plans, *jiritsu katsudo*, and diagnostic evaluation.

It is very important that the words “Hard” and “Unhappy” were classified in the same cluster as individual teaching plans. These words did not appear in the other clusters. This may reflect the increasing load on teachers and recent reports of an increasingly severe problem of teacher burn-out (Miyashita, Mori, Nishimura, & Kitazima, 2011). Thus, it is not difficult to understand that teach-

FIG. 3 Results of the Cluster Analysis

Note. ITP=individual teaching plans.

ers could have a negative image of individual teaching plans.

The present study also showed that the elementary school teachers had a confused image of terms associated with special education. This can be seen in the results of the correspondence analysis, where the words 'Detail', 'Individual', 'Fundamental', 'Thorough', 'Concrete', 'Abstract', 'Approximate', 'Familiar', 'Important', 'Hard', 'Careful', 'Unhappy', and 'Planned' were in the same cluster as individual teaching plans, *jiritsu katsudo*, and diagnostic evaluation. It is essential to study both the procedures and implementation of individual teaching plans in actual classrooms.

The present research reveals the image that teachers have of individual teaching plans. The negative image and attitudes that teachers have may detract from the effectiveness of individual teaching plans.

It is unavoidable that teachers in elementary school feel that individual teaching plans are a burden (Kawamura, 2008). However, Kawamura (2008) noted that it is important to clarify the purpose of designing individual teaching plans and to have a common understanding among teachers, in order to eliminate negative feelings about individual teaching plans.

It seems likely that teachers who have not discussed why individual teaching plans are to be generated are not interested in filling in the blanks in the individual teaching plans. Teachers might prefer to design individual teaching plans more easily and noncommittally. Individual teaching plans should be used more effectively, in order to improve the teaching methods used with each pupil.

One remaining issue in the present study is related to the methodology of the research. Elementary school teachers' image of 6 key concepts was evaluated using the semantic differential technique. The factors obtained from the semantic differential technique reflect only one side of the participants, so the data in the present study reveal only a limited view.

A second issue is how to feed these results back effectively to teachers working in elementary schools. The present study provides evidence suggesting that individual teaching plans are a dead letter. How to design individual teaching plans more effectively and how implement them in classrooms was not investigated. Thus, the results of the present study are limited to capturing the current status of elementary school teachers' image of individual teaching plans. Additional study is needed on implementation of individual teaching plans in classrooms.

Summary

In the present article, the image that elementary school teachers have of individual teaching plans for pupils with disabilities was studied with the semantic differential technique. The teachers who participated had an ambiguous image of concepts related to special education, and felt some burden associated with special education. That may be a cause of their negative attitudes about indi-

vidual teaching plans.

The results from the present research are a warning that individual teaching plans may lose their meaning and effectiveness for enhancing the quality of the education of students with disabilities. Additional research is needed to study how to enhance the effectiveness of individual teaching plans in classrooms.

Endnotes

- 1) “Period for integrated study” is a subject area established in the elementary school curriculum in Japan in 1998. It is intended to enable pupils to think in their own way about life through cross-synthetic and inquiry studies, while fostering the qualities and abilities needed for them to find their own tasks, to learn and think on their own, to make proactive decisions, and to solve problems better. At the same time, it aims to have them acquire habits of studying and thinking, and to cultivate their commitment to problem solving and inquiry in a proactive, creative, and cooperative manner. Each school is supposed to determine its own objectives and content for the period for integrated study (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2009).
- 2) *Jiritsu katsudo* is a specialized subject area in the national curriculum for special schools that has the objective of teaching pupils with disabilities to respect basic human behavior.
- 3) Diagnostic Evaluation is the first step toward determining the nature and significance of problems, and toward getting appropriate care for individual pupils.

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