

Abstract of thesis entitled
“Sense of Time and Delay Aversion in
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)”

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The present study aimed at investigating the deficit in the sense of time and its relationship with delay aversion among children with ADHD. Twenty-five ADHD and 28 normal control boys aged 6 to 11 participated in the study. They were matched by age and intellectual functioning. Consistent with previous literature, children with ADHD were found to have an impaired sense of time, and their performance in time estimation task was shown to be significantly less accurate and more variable when compared to their normal control counterparts. However, the present study failed to replicate previous findings on choice delay tasks. No significant group difference was found in the ability to wait for a delayed reward, and both groups estimated the delay period reasonably accurately. Their performance in

the choice delay task was not correlated with that in the time estimation task.

Limitations and implications of the study were discussed. Performance of children with ADHD appeared to be susceptible to subtle change in external manipulations.

Possible “normalizing” role of strategies such as counting in improving time estimation and delayed gratification was discussed.

撮要

本研究的目的是為探索專注力失調/過度活躍症病童的時間觀念並其對行為表現之影響。本研究邀請了 25 位專注力失調/過度活躍症病童及 28 位來自社區的兒童參與一連串有關時間判斷及延宕滿足的實驗。結果顯示專注力失調/過度活躍症病童在時間判斷實驗中的表現比一般兒童的表現較不準確及多變，這方面的結果跟文獻一致。然而，本研究無法重覆驗證文獻中有關延宕滿足實驗之結果。本研究中，專注力失調/過度活躍症病童和一般兒童在等候延緩和較大的回報的能力上並沒有顯著差異，而兩組兒童均能準確地判斷等候時間之長短。參加者在時間判斷實驗和延宕滿足實驗的表現並沒有顯著相關。本研究引申出專注力失調/過度活躍症病童之時間觀念較一般兒童差及容易受外在因素影響，並討論將來的研究方向及改善他們時間觀念和延宕滿足能力的一些可能策略。