

Young South African children's recognition of emotions as depicted by Picture Communication Symbols.

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ABSTRACT

YOUNG SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN'S RECOGNITION OF EMOTIONS AS DEPICTED BY PICTURE COMMUNICATION SYMBOLS.

Experiencing and expressing emotions is an essential part of psychological well-being. It is for this reason that most graphic symbol sets used in the field of AAC include an array of symbols depicting emotions. However, to date, very limited research has been done on children's ability to recognise and use these symbols to express feelings within different cultural contexts.

The purpose of the current study was to describe and compare Afrikaans and Sepedi speaking grade R children's choice of graphic symbols when depicting four basic emotions, i.e. *happy*; *sad*; *afraid*; and *angry*. After ninety participants (44 Afrikaans and 46 Sepedi speaking) passed a pre-assessment task, they were exposed 24 emotions vignettes. Participants had to indicate the intensity the protagonist in the story would experience. The next step was for the participants to choose a graphic symbol from a 16 matrix overlay which they thought best represented the symbol and intensity.

The results indicated a significant difference at a 1% level between the two groups' selection of expected symbols to represent emotions. Afrikaans speaking participants more often chose expected symbols than Sepedi speaking participants to represent different basic emotions. Sepedi speaking participants made use of a larger variety of symbols to represent the emotions. Participants from both language groups most frequently selected expected symbols to represent *happy* followed by those for *angry* and *afraid* with expected symbols for *sad* selected least frequently.

Except for a significant difference at the 1% level for happy no significant differences were present between the intensities selected by the different language groups for the other three basic emotions. No significant differences between the two gender groups' choices of expected symbols to represent emotions or between the intensities selected by the different gender groups were observed.

Key terms

Basic emotions; Emotions; Emotion knowledge; Emotion situation knowledge; Expected symbols; Graphic symbols Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) TM¹; Preferred symbols; Unexpected symbols.

¹ PCSTM is a Mayer-Johnson product.

OPSOMMING

JONG SUID-AFRIKAANSE KINDERS SE HERKENNING VAN EMOSIES SOOS UITGEBEELD DEUR ‘PICTURE COMMUNICATION SYMBOLS’

Om emosies te ervaar en daaroor te praat is ‘n weselike deel van ‘n mens se psigiese gesondheid. Juis om hierdie rede bevat meeste simbool sisteme in die veld van Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie grafiese simbole om emosies uit te beeld. Tot op hede is daar egter weinig navorsing gedoen oor die vermoë van kinders om hierdie simbole te herken en te gebruik om hulle gevoelens uit te druk.

Die doel van die huidige studie was om graad R Afrikaans- en Sepedi-sprekers se keuse van grafiese simbole wat emosies (*gelukkig, hartseer, bang en kwaad*) verteenwoordig te beskryf en vergelyk. The purpose of the current study was to describe and vergelycompare. Negentig kinders (44 Afrikaans en 46 Sepedi sprekers) is na afloop van ‘n voor-toets prosedure aan 24 emosies storie blootgestel. Hulle moes eers die intensitiet aandui wat hulle dink die hoofrolspeler in die storie ervaar en daarna op ‘n kommunikasiebord, met 16 simbole wat emosies verteenwoordig, aandui watter simbool hulle dink die emosie die beste verteenwoordig.

Die resultate dui op ‘n beduidende verskil tussen die twee taalgroepe se keuse van verwagte simbole om die emosies te verteenwoordig. Afrikaans sprekers het meer gereeld as die Sepedi sprekers die verwagte simbole gekies. Sepedi-sprekers het van ‘n groter verskyneheid simbole gebruik gemaak om die emosies te verteenwoordig. Beide groepe het die hoogste frekwensie verwagte simbole gefies om gelukkig te verteenwoordig, gevolg deur kwaad, bang en hartseer.

Behalwe vir 'n beduidende verskil by gelukkig was daar geen verdere verskille tussen die twee groepe met betrekking tot intensiteit nie. Geen beduidende verskille was teenwoordig by die verskillende geslagte vir die keuse van verwagte simbole of die intensiteit

Sleutel terme

Basiese emosies; Emosionele kennis; Emosionele situasie kennis; Emosies; Grafiese simbole; Onverwagte simbole; Picture Communication Symbols (PCS); Verwagte simbole; Verkose simbole

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