NormCon IP2: Rule-Understanding, Shared Intentionality, and the Evaluation by Others

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How Children Begin to Understand Social Norms: Some Questions

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Basic Questions

- How does norm-guided behavior (i.e. acting on reasons) evolve in ontogeny?
  - offering a seat to somebody vs. raising with a crowd

- How do children understand the evaluation by others?
  - understand the looks they get if not offering the seat

Motivating Questions

- Does norm-guided behavior evolve from children's growing self-awareness?

- Does it depend on mindreading abilites?

- Or do these abilities co-emerge?

    - self-awareness and acting on reasons

    - other-understanding and understanding reasons

Task 1: conceptual clarification

Foundations and components of norm-guided behavior:

a) adaptive responses that <u>precede</u> norm-guided behavior

  Given A, the child does B. (joining the crowd)

b) norm-sensitive behavior (understanding the looks)

  Given A, doing B is requested

c) norm-applications (making requests)

  If A, do B because that is required by a rule.

suggested terminology:

b = basic norm-guided behavior

c = rule-following

Task 2: emotional response data

Kagan (1981): From 15 months on children show emotional distress when failing to imitate a complex action (i.e. a given standard).

Which level of norm-guided behavior is this?

a) still a form of adaptive response? Why not?

b) a norm-sensitive behavior without rule-following? What is still missing?

c) an early form of rule-following? Why not?

Task 3: shared intentionality data

Rakoczy et. al. (2007, 2009, 2010) argue that different forms of shared and collective intentionality can be observed in 1 year and in 2-3 year old children.

Does this correlate with the distinction between a/b?

a) recognizing a norm that is jointly observed? (How is this joint commitment recognized?)

b) following a rule and expecting others to follow? (How is this expectation identified?)

Task 4: Status function data

Rakoczy et. al. (2009) and Wyman et. al. (2009) also argue that 2-3 year old children understand the context-sensitivity of norms by assigning different status functions to an object in different games.

Do these children solve a genuine perspective problem?

a) What conditions define a perspective problem?

b) Are these conditions satisfied in this task?

Task 5: Changing the rules data

Frye and Palfai (1995), Zelazo et. al. (1996), Russell (1996) investigate the difficulties of 3.5 year old children in a dimensional card sorting task (e.g. sorting by color, then by shape).

What makes this change of rules difficult to grasp?

a) executive problems (forgetting the old rule)

b) recognizing the authority of others (rules must not be changed ad hoc)

c) understanding conflict between rules

Request for support

We look forward to getting as much support as possible from the other IPs in our CRP, as well as from the other CRPs in EuroUnderstanding.

Thank you!