Talking about Emotions Using Culturally Sensitive AAC

Ji Young Na, M.A., CF-SLP
Sarah Blackstone, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Krista Wilkinson, Ph.D.

1 The Pennsylvania State University
2 Augmentative Communication, Inc.

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• Background

• Body of Evidence: Literature Review

• Recommendations: Cultural Considerations for Communication about Emotions using AAC

• Recent Research
  – Early Development of Emotional Competencies (EDEC) tool
• **Background**
  – Why culture should be considered in communication about emotions using AAC?

• **Body of Evidence: Literature Review**

• **Recommendations: Cultural Considerations**

• **Recent Research**
Why Culture Should Be Considered in Communication about Emotions Using AAC?

• Based on the evidence in **AAC**
  – Culturally appropriate graphic symbol selection
    (e.g., Bornman & Bryen, 2013; Huer, 2000; Llyod et al., 1997)
  – Consideration of the level of acculturation in AAC research
    (e.g., Nigam, 2003; Huer, 2003)

• Based on the evidence in **EMOTION**
  – Emotion is culturally grounded for each individual
    (Ekman et al., 1987)
  – Many cross-cultural studies on emotion recognition and expression
    (e.g., Beaupre & Hess, 2005; Koda et al., 2009; Yuki, et al., 2007)
We need to know more...

- Very limited research on culture issue in communication about emotions using AAC
Outline

• Background

• **Body of Evidence: Literature Review**
  – Cultural impacts on emotional competence

• Recommendations: Cultural Considerations for Communication about Emotions using AAC

• Recent Research
Cultural Impacts on Emotional Competence

• Adults
  (e.g., Elfenbein & Ambadt, 2002; Imada & Ellsworth, 2011; Yuki, Maddux, & Masuda, 2007)
  – Many studies on adults
  – Various cultures
  – Suggest cultural impacts on emotional recognition and expression
Cultural Impacts on Emotional Competence (Cont.)

- **Specific to Children**
  (Camras et al., 1998; Camras et al., 2007; Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002; Markham & Wang, 1996; Novin, Rieffe, & Mo, 2010; Raval et al., 2010)
  - Fewer number of studies
  - Suggested cultural impacts
    - More vs less expressive
    - Direct vs Indirect emotion expressions
    - Different modes of emotion expressions
      - Facial expressions, words, gestures, etc.
    - Different appraisal
      - Ways to interpret events & connect them to emotions
Outline

• Background

• Body of Evidence: Literature Review

• **Recommendations: Cultural Considerations for Communication about Emotions Using AAC**
  – Emotion symbols
  – Communication about emotions using AAC

• Recent Research
Culturally Sensitive Emotion Symbols

• Design
  – Culturally sensitive emotion symbol design is one of the most effective ways to enhance the quality of emotion language use by CLD AAC users (Huer, 2000)
  – Example
Culturally Sensitive Emotion Symbols (Cont.)

- **Selection**
  - More vs less expressive
  - Aggressiveness & Assertiveness
  - Example (Cole et al., 2002)

- [Image of angry face] USA
- [Image of shamed face] Nepal (Tamang)

> “Your father spilt tea on your homework”
• **Expectations**
  - Emotions that are **acceptable** to talk about may differ depending on cultural backgrounds
  - Emotions that are **preferred not to discuss** may differ depending on cultural backgrounds
  - These expectations should be applied for not only emotion **expression**, but also **recognition**
  - Examples

![Pictograms of emotions: proud, frightened, anxious, depressed, sad, bored]
Culturally Sensitive Conversation about Emotions

• 3 Suggested Elements
  – Labeling
    • Emotion symbols
  – Validation
    • Discussion about the intensity of the emotion
    • Discussion about the reason for the emotion
  – Response
    • Discussion about the solution for the emotion
• Validation
  – The intensity of and the reason for the emotion may differ depending on the audience and the situation in diverse cultures
  – Example (Cole et al., 2002)
Culturally Sensitive Conversation about Emotions (Cont.)

• **Response (Solution for the emotion)**
  
  – Example (Cole et al., 2002)

  **Label**
  
  USA
  
  Angry
  
  “Your father spilt tea on your homework”
  
  Nepal (Tamang)
  
  Ashamed

  **Validation**
  
  dad
  
  is
  
  wrong

  I
  
  am
  
  wrong

  **Response**
  
  I want to talk to you
  
  shh. be quiet
## Summary of Recommendations

### Cultural Considerations for Communication about Emotions Using AAC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Emotion Symbols</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1) Design</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(2) Selection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(3) Expectations</strong></td>
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<th>2. Conversation about Emotions Using AAC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1) Validation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(2) Response</strong></td>
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“Small c” culture

• Diverse countries in one culture
• Diverse communities in one country
• Diverse individuals in one community

• Keep in mind that one child from a certain culture would have a same/different preference of emotion symbols and phrases with the other child with the identical cultural background
Outline

• Background

• Body of Evidence: Literature Review

• Recommendations: Cultural Considerations for Communication about Emotions Using AAC

• Recent Research
Early Development of Emotional Competencies: A Tool for Children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN)


Original version (2012)
Revised version (2013)
Current version (2014)
Recent Research - EDEC tool (Cont.)

• Interview with family and service professionals (24 Qs)

• Descriptive Instrument
  – NOT prescriptive purpose
  – NOT norm-referenced

• Purposes
  – Raise Awareness about the relation of language (including AAC) and emotional competence
  – Ensure a child’s communication intervention includes language to discuss emotions

• 2 Field Tests
  – Original version (2012) – Field test #1
  – Revised version (2013) – Field test #2
  – Current version (2014)
Recent Research - EDEC tool (Cont.)

• 7 Languages
  – To provide culturally appropriate tool
  – To increase awareness about culturally sensitive emotion language in AAC

Current
• Danish
• English
• German
• Korean
• Spanish

Future
• Dutch
• French
• Cross-cultural Study Using the EDEC tool
  – Study Objectives
    • How does the tool work in general?
    • Does the tool reveal systematic and expected variability (cross-cultural difference)?
  – Participants
    • Interviewed American (n=10) and Korean (n=10) parents
      – With young children (birth-10 years) who are typically developing
  – Initial Results (Ongoing Study)
    • Two of the interview questions
    • But they illustrate potential cultural differences
6. Prompting by parent/caregiver for verbal labeling

"Different families/caregivers may vary in how they prompt their children’s verbal labeling of emotion. How often do you try to get {name} to label his/her own emotions using words, signs, or symbols?"

*If the caregiver responds “sometimes” or “most of the time”, ask for an example.*

*If the caregiver responds “occasionally” or “never”, ask: “Ok, thanks. What do you do instead?”*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MOST OF THE TIME</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>ONLY OCCASIONALLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
<th>NOT SURE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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**American**

**Korean**
Parents’ Prompting of Emotion Labeling (Cont.)

Reasons from American mothers
(Majority = most of the time)

- “I am trying to let her know that it is okay to talk about feelings.”
- “I am doing this because this is the strategy I use for myself.”

Reasons from Korean mothers
(Majority = sometimes or less)

- “She is good at labeling her emotions already”
- “Because he is the oldest one, I often tell him not to express his feelings”
### 14. Interacting with media (books, videos, etc.) - input

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
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<td>&quot;When you are reading books or watching TV/movies, do you talk about the emotions that the characters are experiencing?&quot;</td>
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![Bar chart showing the percentage of parents who talk about emotions in books with their children.](chart.png)

- **American**
  - Yes: 80%
  - No: 20%

- **Korean**
  - Yes: 80%
  - No: 20%
Parents’ Input about Emotions in Book (Cont.)

Reasons why not:
American mothers (20%)
- “He is old enough to understand the character’s emotion”

Reasons why not:
Korean mothers (80%)
- “He is old enough to understand the emotions by himself”
- “He can read a book by himself”
• **Importance**  
  – It is critical that individuals who use AAC have ways to communicate their own and others’ feelings using *culturally appropriate* emotion language (AAC)  
  – They need culturally sensitive means to communicate about their feelings and emotions, opinions, interests, and beliefs

• **Current Efforts**  
  – We are trying to support *families* and *professionals* to have a better *awareness* about the need

• **Future Systematic Research: Needed**  
  – Directly evaluate the appropriateness of various types of symbols & AAC practices  
  – Determine whether these *speculations* are correct
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\textsuperscript{1} The Pennsylvania State University
\textsuperscript{2} Augmentative Communication, Inc
\textsuperscript{3} Centro de Apoyo Tecnológico para la Comunicación y el Aprendizaje
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References


Discussion