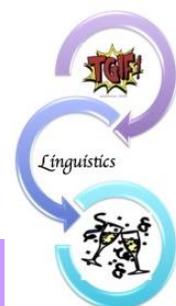




# TGIF:

## The NTU Linguist Chatroom



**Join us! Friday, 8 November 2019, 3.30pm  
@ HSS Conference Room (HSS-05-57)**

### **Children's emotion understanding: Development, antecedents, and consequences**

Understanding one's own or other's emotions is a fundamental skill in children's life. Studies in Western cultures have shown that children's emotion understanding predicts their prosocial behaviors, social competence, academic achievement, and so forth (Denham, et al., 2003; Izard et al., 2001; Rhoades, Warren, Domitrovich, & Greenberg, 2011). Many factors have been shown related to children's emotion understanding, such as parent-child conversations about emotions and parental reactions to children's emotions. However, little is known regarding the development of children's emotion understanding or its relations to their developmental antecedents and outcomes in Asian countries.

People from varied cultural backgrounds differ in their ways to communicate emotions. Whereas semantic content explicitly expresses feelings, vocal tone and facial expression convey relatively implicit information regarding emotions. European Americans tend to communicate emotions more directly through verbal content, while Asians' emotion communication tend to be more indirect and implicit. As a result, Chinese or Chinese American preschoolers had a lower level of explicit emotion knowledge than European American preschoolers. However, regarding implicit emotion knowledge, Chinese children recognized emotions from vocal tones more accurately and quickly than American children.

Children's emotion understanding is a crucial core of social awareness within broader socioemotional competence (Denham et al., 2003). Understanding emotions can help children communicate their own feelings and predict others' feelings and behaviors. Therefore, emotion understanding plays an important role in relationship maintenance and emotion regulation. Cross-cultural studies suggested that emotion understanding was related to social-emotional outcome in different ways depending on the children's cultural backgrounds.

Various factors contribute to children's emotional development. One form of emotion socialization is how mothers react to children's negative emotions, including supportive reactions (e.g., solving the problem, comforting, and encouraging emotion expression) and non-supportive reactions (e.g., punishment and minimization). Another way of emotion socialization is through mother-child conversation. For instance, discussion of internal states can make thoughts and feelings explicit and help children understand emotions. Other than explicit conversation, maternal emotion expression during mother-child interaction is also critical to children's emotional development. In this talk, the speaker will discuss the findings regarding children's emotional development in relation to above-mentioned factors and social-emotional outcomes in different cultural contexts.

### **Speaker**



**Dr. Yang Yang** is a Research Scientist at the Centre for Research in Child Development at National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her research interests are 1) the development of emotion recognition, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation from infancy to middle childhood in different cultural contexts, 2) the factors that affect children's socioemotional development, such as cultural values, parenting behaviors, parent-child interactions, and child temperament, 3) how children's emotional development relates to their later psychological functioning and academic achievement. Dr. Yang Yang has published her work in distinguished journals, such as *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *Transcultural Psychiatry*, and *Clinical Psychological Science*. She also co-edited a special issue in *Culture and Emotional Development* for *Culture and Brain*.

The TGIF seminar series is organised by  
the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, SoH

