Comparison of Agency in Finnish and Taiwanese Day Care Center Children

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Research Questions

1. How do Taiwanese and Finnish children differ in agentive perception?
2. How do Taiwanese and Finnish children differ in agentive perception when responding to adult-child and child-child situations?

Research Method

• 366 Taiwanese and 698 Finnish children
• Age 3-6

• Interview with 16 items about situations in day care setting
• Items concern adult-child or child-child interaction
Research Framework
Reunamo’s agentive perception

Agency
Environment changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea differs from action</td>
<td>Idea influenced by action</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agentive</th>
<th>Agentive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assimilative</td>
<td>Accommodative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive</td>
<td>Adaptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilative</td>
<td>Accommodative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adaptation
No change in environment

Two Way Analysis

1. Taiwan vs. Finland
2. Accommodative vs. Assimilative
1. In both countries, Accommodative > Assimilative

2. Taiwan shows a larger difference

Two Way Analysis

1. Finland vs. Taiwan
2. Agentive vs. Adaptive
### Finland vs Taiwan  Agentive vs Adaptive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agentive</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In both countries, Agentive > Adaptive

2. Children in both countries tend to initiate change in their environment, with Taiwanese children having a higher tendency

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### Two Way Analysis

1. Finland vs. Taiwan

2. Levels of Agency + Adaptation

Comparing proportion of:

1. $aG-aS$  agentive-assimilative
2. $aG-aC$  agentive-accommodative
3. $aD-aS$  adaptive-assimilative
4. $aD-aC$  adaptive-accommodative
1. In both countries, the proportions show the same order: most children perceive themselves to change the environment and also accommodating to the situation; next is adapting to the situation by changing own idea; third is trying to change the environment to suit own idea; least often do children stay with old idea and stay passive.

2. Taiwan higher than Finland in aGaC and aDaC.

3. Finland higher than Taiwan in aGaS and aDaS.

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Three Way Analysis

1. Finland vs. Taiwan
2. Accommodation vs. Assimilation
3. Adult-Child Situations vs. Child-Child Situations
Interview Items (Adult-Child Interaction)

10. A teacher comes to stop your play. What do you do then?

11. What if you don’t like the activity arranged by the teacher? What do you do then?

Interview Items (Child-Child Interaction)

6. Let’s think you are playing with someone and your friend wants to change play. What do you do?

7. What if a friend will not play with you? What do you do?
1. In both countries, more accommodation (blue) than assimilation (red), both with adults and peers.

2. Taiwan had larger differences than Finland between aC and aS.

Three Way Analysis

1. Finland vs. Taiwan
2. Agentive vs. Adaptive
3. Adult-Child Situations vs. Child-Child Situations
Three Way Analysis

1. Finland vs. Taiwan

2. Levels of Agency + Adaptation

Comparing:

1. aG-aS  agentive-assimilative
2. aG-aC  agentive-accommodative
3. aD-aS  adaptive-assimilative
4. aD-aC  adaptive-accommodative

3. Adult-Child Situations vs. Child-Child Situations
Towards Adults

1. **Adaptive-Accom** is highest – Child goes along with adult suggestions

2. **Adaptive-Assim** is lowest – Few children remain unchanged and insistent

3. For Agency:
   - **Finland** more Agentive-Assim  Child more insist in own way
   - **Taiwan** more Agentive-Accom  Child more negotiate more

Towards Peers

1. **Agentive-Accom** is highest — Child sees a possibility for changing the environment, and tries to negotiate it, but may also change himself

2. The trend is more marked for Taiwan children.
Conclusions

1. Children’s responses in Finland and Taiwan are similar in many ways
   – Accommodative responses $>\,$ assimilative responses
   – Agentive responses $>\,$ adaptive responses
   Therefore,
   most responses are agentive-accommodative

   – Children differentiate between adults and peers
     They are adaptive-accommodative to adults
     They are agentive-accommodative to children

Conclusion

2. The trends are stronger in Taiwan

   Children are even more adaptive-accommodative to adults

   Children are even more agentive-accommodative to children