README

DATA COLLECTION

All data were collected on the 2nd of March 2016.

PARTICIPANTS

Forty-four children aged 8-11 years (mean 9 years +/- 0.9, 24 male), were recruited from years 4, 5 and 6 of a primary school in the North West of England. Parents/Guardians gave written informed consent for their child’s participation. Each child also provided informed assent before beginning the study. The study was approved by the LJMU Psychology Research Ethics Committee.

METHOD

Participants viewed and rated a random sequence of 15 short (5 sec) videos depicting one male individual being touched by a female at 5 different skin sites (back, upper arm, ventral forearm, dorsal forearm and palm) and at 3 different velocities (Static touch, slow - CT optimal strokes and fast – non-CT optimal strokes) (Walker et al 2017). Immediately after viewing each clip, a new screen appeared where participants were asked to make a hedonic rating using a smiley face scale (designed and validated for use with young children by Cascio et al 2016 & Croy et al 2019 (1) Thinking about the video you have just watched answer the question below by choosing a face. How nice do you think it was for the person being touched? (2) Again, thinking about the same video answer the question below by choosing a face. How much would you like to be touched like that? These two questions always appeared in the same order, each on a new screen, with question 2 appearing directly after the response to question 1 was made. They were designed to probe expectations of how touch is perceived by others versus self.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Following the procedure of Croy et al (2019), in their previous use of this rating scale to measure children’s perception of affective touch, the ratings from the pictorial scales were converted into numbers (1-very bad, 2-bad, 3-neutral, 4-happy, 5-very happy).

Data were analyzed in SPSS (Version 26) using a generalized linear model with ordinal logistic link function; Velocity (3 levels) and Location (5 levels) were entered as within subject factors, subject was entered as a random factor. Significant main effects were followed up using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests for non-parametric data. Due to a coding error, it is not possible to match up a participant’s gender to their age and touch rating data.

METADATA

A description of the column labels of the database is provided in the datasheet "Metadata", in the Excel database.

ACCESS TO VIDEO-CLIPS USED IN THE STUDY

The video-clips used in this study are available on request.

Please contact the corresponding author, Susannah Walker, [s.c.walker@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.c.walker@ljmu.ac.uk)

REFERENCES

Cascio CJ, Lorenzi J, Baranek GT. Self-reported Pleasantness Ratings and Examiner-Coded Defensiveness in Response to Touch in Children with ASD: Effects of Stimulus Material and Bodily Location. J Autism Dev Disord. 2016;46(5):1528–37.

Croy I, Sehlstedt I, Wasling HB, Ackerley R, Olausson H. Gentle touch perception: From early childhood to adolescence. Dev Cogn Neurosci. 2019 Feb 1;35:81–6.

Walker SC, Trotter PD, Woods A, McGlone F. Vicarious ratings of social touch reflect the anatomical distribution &amp; velocity tuning of C-tactile afferents: A hedonic homunculus? Behav Brain Res. 2017;320.