

Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Defeyter, Margaret Anne (Greta) and Underwood, Joanne (2010) Proper artifact use: The action-protest paradigm. In: Northern League Developmental Consortium, 8 January 2010, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

URL:

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/33221/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>

This document may differ from the final, published version of the research and has been made available online in accordance with publisher policies. To read and/or cite from the published version of the research, please visit the publisher's website (a subscription may be required.)



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



University**Library**

Background

•Research suggests that there is shared agreement among a community about the conventionalised functions of artifacts based upon how a community uses that object (German, Truxaw & Defeyter, 2007; Seston, Kelemen, & DiYanni, submitted).

▪ Casler, Terziyan & Greene (2009) used Rakoczy, Warneken & Tomasello, (2008) action-protest paradigm and suggest that toddlers demonstrate a normatively defined awareness that there are right and wrong ways to act upon objects.

•However, Casler and colleagues always demonstrated the conventional function during the familiarisation phase, followed by a puppet demonstrating an alternate function during the test phase.

Method

Participants:

23 children aged between 3 and 5 years (mean = 3.5 years; range = 3.1 - 5.2), 9 males, 14 females were observed in a testing session which took place in a nursery or school setting.

Procedure:

Children were randomly allocated to 1 of 3 conditions in which three familiar objects, toothbrush, baby bottle and crayon, had a different function.

Idiosyncratic-Conventional	Brushing hair - Cleaning teeth	Rolling dough - Drinking	Stirring mixture - Drawing
Instrumental-Conventional	Jabbing - Cleaning teeth	Drawing circles - Drinking	Tapping - Drawing
Instrumental-Idiosyncratic	Jabbing - Brushing hair	Drawing circles - Rolling dough	Tapping - Stirring mixture



Each condition consisted of a familiarisation phase followed by a test phase. Within each condition, the familiarisation function and test function were counterbalanced. All demonstrations were carried out by two puppets 'Sam' and 'Sally'.

Function knowledge check: At the end of each trial children were asked, "What is a toothbrush used for? What is a bottle used for? What is a crayon used for?" All sessions were videotaped for coding.

Measures:

Scores for expressions of normative protest:

Overt protest (2 points): E.g., explicit telling off, "No! It's not for that!"

Implicit protest (1 point): E.g., laughing at Sally's use of the objects, scrutinising Sally's behaviour by looking quizzically at what she was doing with the objects.

Predictions:

1. If Casler and colleagues are correct then toddlers should only protest when the conventional function is violated.
2. However, if toddlers are simply protesting against a violation of the artifact's use 'in this context', then it would appear that whilst children do have a normative awareness regarding conventional function they are quite flexible in terms of the use of an object across different function contexts.

References:

- Casler, K., Terziyan, T., & Green, K. (2009). Toddlers view artifact function normatively. *Cognitive Development*,
- German, T., Truxaw, D., & Deyfeyter, M. (2007). The role of information about "convention", "design", and "goal" in representing artifact kind. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 115, 69-81.
- Rakoczy, H., Warneken, F., & Tomasello, M. (2008). The sources of normativity: Young children's awareness of the normative structure of games. *Developmental Psychology*, 44, 875-881.
- Seston, R., Keleman, D., & DiYanni, C. (submitted for publication). Previous reliability or consensual majority? Determining the better source for conventional knowledge.