

Test of Emotional Comprehension: Exploring the underlying structure through Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Similarity Structure Analysis

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Abstract: Some decades of research on emotional development have underlined the contribution of several domains to emotional understanding in childhood. Based on this research, Pons and colleagues (Pons & Harris, 2002; Pons, Harris & Rosnay, 2004) have proposed the *Test of Emotional Comprehension* (TEC) which assesses nine domains of emotional understanding, namely the recognition of emotions, based on facial expressions; the comprehension of external emotional causes; impact of desire on emotions; emotions based on beliefs; memory influence on emotions; possibility of emotional regulation; possibility of hiding an emotional state; having mixed emotions; contribution of morality to emotional experiences. This instrument was administered individually to 182 Portuguese children aged between 8 and 11 years, of 3rd and 4th grades, in public schools. Additionally, we used the *Socially in Action-Peers* (SAp) (Rocha, Candeias & Lopes da Silva, 2012) to assess TEC's criterion-related validity. Mean differences results in TEC by gender and by socio-economic status (SES) were analyzed. The results of the TEC's psychometric analysis were performed in terms of items' sensitivity and reliability (stability, test-retest). Finally, in order to explore the theoretical structure underlying TEC a Confirmatory Factor Analysis and a Similarity Structure Analysis were computed. Implications of these findings for emotional understanding assessment and intervention in childhood are discussed.