Title

Emoji-Induced Positivity Bias in Lexical Processing: Evidence from a Priming Lexical Decision Task

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0102m0ds

Journal

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 45(45)

Authors

Stoianov, Demian
Kemp, Nenagh
Wegener, Signy
et al.

Publication Date

2023

Peer reviewed

Emoji-Induced Positivity Bias in Lexical Processing: Evidence from a Priming Lexical Decision Task

Demian Stoianov
Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Nenagh Kemp
University of Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Signy Wegener
Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Lisi Beyersmann
Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Abstract

Emojis are pervasive in modern communication, highlighting the importance of understanding their influence on language processing. This study used two online primed LDT experiments to examine the lexical effects of emoji-conveyed valence and face status. In Experiment 1, neutral target words were primed by positive face and non-face emojis, compared to neutral control conditions. Experiment 2 involved neutral target words primed by negative face and non-face emojis relative to neutral controls. Experiment 1 revealed a main facilitatory priming effect in the positive condition, regardless of face status. In Experiment 2, no effects were significant. The results suggest that emoji-induced positivity bias occurs independently of the face or non-face status, reflecting emotional processing and interaction between lexical and affective processes rather than the semantic richness of emotional stimuli. These findings have practical implications for emoji-conveyed positivity in reading and stress the need to control emotional content in visual word recognition.