

Anticipation of Another's Cognitive Content in Young Children

KOBAYASHI Riho

Graduate School of Science for Human Services, Ritsumeikan University

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The purpose of this study is to investigate how young children anticipate another's cognitive content, using false-belief tasks that consist of standard types and modified types.

In this study, 86 young children (ages 3, 4, 5, and 6) were presented with short stories with pictures and were then asked to predict the protagonists' choices and to explain the reason for such choice. The main findings of this study are as follows. (1) The older the children become, the more correctly they can provide an answer about another's false belief and the more they can explain the reason for their anticipation. Also, there are plural courses of development regarding young children's anticipation of another's cognitive content, along with explanations for the reasons for such. For example, some young children can provide an answer correctly about another's false belief, although they are not able to explain their anticipation. On the other hand, other young children are not able to provide an answer for another's false belief although they are able to explain their anticipation. (2) The children aged 5 and 6 were able to explain the reason for the protagonists' initial action or perceptual experience when they anticipate another's false belief. On the other hand, most of the children aged 3 and 4 were not able to correctly explain the anticipation of another's false belief, while there are differences in answers between the children aged 3 and 4. In conclusion, the development of young children's anticipation about another's cognitive content can be seen as being quite broad in scope.