# Representational flexibility in the second year of life : an exploratory study of the eye toy

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Abstrak

The ability to comprehend symbolic representations is deemed as an imperative property of human cognition in the midst of this symbol-flooded world. This study aimed to investigate the early development of this ability and its relation to self-recognition in the second year of life. I presented children with a novel video game (SONY PlayStation 2 Eye Toy or ET), in which child's own image is incorporated in the game's display. Using detailed observation of children's responses to the experimental and control conditions, I investigated if they recognized this unusual symbol-referent relation. I also surreptitiously marked each child on their forehead to study if they recognized themselves in the video image (VSR). The underlining assumption is that in order to pass the self-recognition task, children should grasp basic correspondence of image-referent in the video reflection. Thus, those who passed the visual self-recognition task were hypothesized to also demonstrate better performance on the Eye Toy game than those who did not pass. Participants consisted of 8,24-month-olds and 12,30-month-olds. Results revealed that there was no difference between older and younger children performance in both ET and VSR tasks. Although children did display some insight to the novel symbol-referent relation in the game, their performance in ET and VSR task was not related. Implications and suggestion for future research in this area are discussed in light of the new findings.