

42. Playing with emotions in the Moodroom

We have developed a Moodroom in which youngsters can express their emotions by moving their bodies. The Moodroom is an interactive installation that records bodily movements with a Kinect-sensor and translates them into colours, patterns, vibrations and sounds. The visual content is projected on three screens in front of the user. In the Moodroom youngsters can express and share their emotions without having to talk about them.



The Moodroom is based on the principles of embodied cognition. Embodied cognition is an upcoming subject in both social psychology and neuropsychology that recognizes the mutual influence between our body, senses and cognitive functions. One aspect of this is communicating about emotions through visual cues, like colors and patterns. The goal of the Moodroom is to create a new way in which youngsters can get to know themselves and each other in an embodied learning environment.

ICT science question

How can sensory experiences be translated and used in a playful way in an interactive environment? First, we focus on abstract visual representations to arrive at a new 'language' of movements in which participants can express and communicate their emotions better than in words. We have the ambition to add other sensory experiences like sound and music.

Application

Many youngsters experience difficulties in expressing emotions and showing empathy. By using a new 'language' based on sensory experiences and body movements, and with the use of visual and audio representations, youngsters can express themselves in an accessible and entertaining way without being hindered by the abstract character of language.

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We have partnered up with Bascule (a psychiatric institute for children and youngsters) to explore the possibilities to integrate the Moodroom in some of their therapies. Competitors might be found in developers of Microsoft Kinect applications.

Alternative Application

In other therapeutic situations, for example while rehabilitating after a stroke or injury, the Moodroom could function like a diary to record the recovery process in relation to the emotional health of the patient. The installation could also have a place at festivals and other informal places where people can interact with each other. Visualization can have a more public function. The application can have a function both in communication and in empowerment.

Quote

'NICE! I didn't know that you could show emotions with colours and shapes.' - Girl (15)

'The reactions of the youngsters were very positive. Nice to work with emotions in an interactive way.' - Therapist at the psychiatric institute Bascule



Visual communication of emotions in Moodroom is displaying embodied interaction, enabling youngsters to express and share their emotions without having to talk about them.



Moodroom is a physical space where visual communication of emotions can be displayed by embodied interaction domains.



Moodroom is a physical space for emotional communication, using a newly designed 'language' based on sensory experiences and body movements, which can be applied in a wide range of domains.



Moodroom is a physical interactive space where wordless and visual communication of emotions can be displayed, using a newly designed 'language' based on sensory experiences and body movements.



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