14 Linguistic issues in studying bullying-related phenomena
Data from a revised cartoon task

*Peter K. Smith, Keumjoo Kwak, Rubina Hanif,
Tomoyuki Kanetsuna, Jess Mahdavi, Siu-Fung Lin,
Ragnar Olafsson and Zehra Ucanok*

Although standardised instruments, such as the Olweus questionnaire, are often used to compare bullying across different countries, often little attention is paid to the words used to translate the term *bullying*. But this Anglo-Saxon term, while well recognised in northern Europe, does not have a close cognate in the Latin languages; and terms with somewhat different meaning are used in eastern countries such as Japan and South Korea. In Japan, *ijime* is generally taken as the concept closest to *bullying*, but there appear to be some important differences. Similar phenomena in South Korea can be described by *wang-ta*. In this chapter we review this issue, and describe the cartoon task (P. K. Smith et al., 2002), which was developed to examine the meaning of bullying-related terms in different languages. We consider some limitations of the original cartoon task, especially in relation to bullying phenomena in non-western countries such as Japan and Korea. We then describe the development of an expanded version of the cartoon task, and some findings using this in nine western and eastern cultures.

Etic and emic approaches

Many researchers compare findings across cultures using standardised instruments – usually, self-report questionnaires. For example, the World Health Organisation surveys on Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) provide data on bullying, based on a single victim item and a single bully item adapted from the Olweus questionnaire. This asks how often a child has been bullied, or bullied others, over the past couple of

months. Craig et al. (2009) provided findings from the 2005–06 survey, with a data set from forty countries, mostly European, but also including the United States, Canada, Russian Federation and Ukraine. Currie et al. (2012) provided data from the 2009–10 survey, with a data set from 38 countries, again mostly European, but also including the United States, Canada, Russian Federation, Armenia and Ukraine. Such data has been used in a comparative way, for example to demonstrate an appreciable correlation, around 0.6, between countries with high-income inequality and rates of bullying others (Elgar et al., 2009).

Such approaches assume an essential commonality of 'bullying' across different cultures. However, other researchers assert that terms for *bullying* in different languages, may have different meanings. For example, *bullying* in England, *ijime* in Japan and *wang-ta* in South Korea are different in terms of how they are defined and their meaning to respondents in surveys (Morita et al., 1999; Lee, Smith and Monks, 2011). In a study in Vietnam, Horton (2012) pointed out how *bat nat*, the nearest equivalent term to bullying, had a distinct meaning, of being made to do something you would not otherwise do.

This tension reflects the difference between 'etic' and 'emic' research traditions in attempts to draw cross-cultural comparisons, as in anthropology generally. An 'etic' approach uses preconceived categories (such as 'bullying') to draw comparisons, using standard instruments. An 'emic' approach instead elicits meaningful categories for each particular culture, from analysis and informants within that culture. Some balance needs to be drawn between these perspectives, if we aim to analyse cultural differences. At extremes, an etic approach rides roughshod over genuine differences, while an emic approach fails to allow any meaningful comparisons or generalisations at all.

Structured questionnaire approaches in studying bullying

Many studies have used structured questionnaires of some kind, usually self-report inventories or nomination procedures. For example, an adapted version of the Olweus questionnaire was used in a cross-national study in Norway, England, the Netherlands and Japan (Morita, 2001). Four teams used an identical questionnaire with the same age groups (10–14 years) at the same time of year (June) and on a reasonably national basis; the data shown in Table 14.1 were based on a common question *How often have you been bullied at school in the last six months?* (with five response options: the data comprise the last three, sometimes, once a week, several times a week; excluding never, or only once or twice).

Table 14.1 *Rates of being victimised, from a similar self-report questionnaire given in four countries (details in text).*

Victim	Total	Girls	Boys	10 years	11 years	12 years	13 years	14 years
England	12.2	11.8	12.7	18.7	13.1	12.1	10.5	7.6
The Netherlands	13.9	13.1	14.8	14.7	16.6	14.2	10.3	7.1
Norway	10.0	9.1	11.1	12.4	11.9	9.5	10.0	–
Japan	9.6	9.0	9.9	13.4	9.9	9.5	8.2	6.5

This etic procedure, apparently so simple, followed intense and sometimes difficult negotiations among the four teams involved, in designing a common questionnaire (P. K. Smith, Kanetsuna and Koo, 2007). Some were issues around response alternatives, and some about actual questions asked. The four teams finally agreed a solution: a questionnaire embodying 'core questions' (in all versions) plus 'option questions' (only if that team wished to include them). The core questions included the one on 'how often have you been bullied at school, in the last six months?'; this common question allowed cross-national comparisons to be made (Table 1).

But is it the same question? The respective terms used would have been *mobbing* (Norwegian), *bullying* (English), *pesten* (Dutch) and *ijime* (Japanese). Do these mean the same to pupils? The standard definitions of *bullying*, and *ijime*, while similar, show some differences:

> *Bullying*: 'A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students' (Olweus, 1999, p.10).

> *Ijime*: 'A type of aggressive behaviour by which someone who holds a dominant position in a group interaction process, by intentional or collective acts, causes mental and/or physical suffering to another inside a group' (Morita et al., 1999, p.311).

These two definitions share the concept of repeated negative acts, but the definition of *ijime* puts more emphasis on its group or collective nature, and the possibility of mental suffering. It also puts emphasis on the dominant group position of the bully, although this imbalance of power is usually also considered as a criterion for bullying in western cultures (Hunter, Boyle and Warden, 2007).

To try to ensure consistency of response, questionnaires can give a 'standard' definition at the start; for example in the Olweus questionnaire this takes the form: 'We say a young person is being bullied, or picked on, when another young person, or a group of young people, say nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a young person is hit, kicked or threatened, locked inside a room, *sent nasty notes, when no-one ever talks to them* and things like that. These things can happen frequently and it is difficult for the young person being bullied to defend himself or herself. It is also bullying when a young person is teased repeatedly in a nasty way. But it is not bullying when two young people of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel'.

But this approach has two possible drawbacks. One is a practical one: do pupils filling in a questionnaire, actually remember this long definition and use it when they come later to answer *How often have you been bullied at school this term?* The second is a conceptual one, the etic/emic issue. Can such an approach be 'culture-neutral', or does it ignore important cultural differences in how bullying-like phenomena are understood by pupils? For example, could *ijime* be substituted for *bullying* in the above definition, without any problem?

Some interesting differences can nevertheless emerge, even from core questions as in the four-nation study. For example, this study (Morita, 2001), plus subsequent direct comparison between pupils in England and Japan using questionnaire surveys (Kanetsuna and Smith, 2002; Kanetsuna, 2004; Kanetsuna, Smith and Morita, 2006), identified several important differences between *bullying* in England and *ijime* in Japan. In Japan, pupils who do *ijime* to others are more often in the same year group, and often are (former) 'friends' of the victim. It happens more often in the classroom. It often involves ignoring and social exclusion. Pupils have rather pessimistic or negative attitudes to school-based interventions. In England, pupils who *bully* others are more often in higher years, and less often former 'friends'. It often happens in the playground. It is more often physical or verbal than involving social ignoring or exclusion. Pupils have relatively positive attitudes to school-based interventions (see Chapter 8 for more detail).

A large-scale survey by Koo, Kwak and Smith (2008) in South Korea (see also Chapter 5) found some similar phenomena. Across five main areas of the country, 2,926 pupils aged 11–16 years were given a questionnaire on *wang-ta*. The rates of being *wang-ta* (victim) more than just once or twice in a term, averaged out at 5.8% – quite low in international terms (as can be seen from Table 14.1). But the rates of doing *wang-ta* (bully) more than just once or twice in a term, averaged out at 10.2% – quite high in international terms. Victim rates were higher in boys

(7.3%) than girls (4.2%); bully rates were higher in girls (11.1%) than in boys (9.3%) – different from many other findings.

Similar to the findings for *ijime*, the reported grade of those doing *wang-ta* was mostly in the same class (77%), with only 3% in a higher grade. The number of pupils doing *wang-ta* reported by victims was also quite high; only 17% reported one bully, whereas 50% reported around 3 to 5 bullies, and 33% reported around 10 bullies or even more (by contrast in Europe some 30–50% of bullying is by 1 pupil).

What are the explanations for these differences between bullying-like phenomena, in eastern and western cultures? One set of explanations may simply lie in systemic differences in the educational systems (see Chapter 12); for example in the amount of time spent in home base classrooms by pupils; the extent and supervision of break times; and the amount and types of anti-bullying/anti-ijime interventions at school level and national level (for example, in England, there is a legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy; and there are considerable government resources for anti-bullying work).

Another set of explanations lies in broader cultural differences amongst these societies. Hofstede (1980) and Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) proposed five or six main dimensions differentiating cultures (see also Chapters 13 and 20). The most well -known is *Collectivism* vs. *Individualism*. Li et al. (2010) examined intracultural variation in Chinese adolescents, linking endorsement of collectivism with less use of overt and relational aggression. However, a more collectivistic culture may imply a greater possibility of concerted whole-group (e.g., whole-class) norms emerging, which could at times be aggressive – thus the possibility of severe whole-class aggression and shunning of a victim. Koo et al. (2008) argued that greater collectivism may explain an emphasis on class-based exclusion and a greater ratio of bullies to victims found in South Korea and Japan.

A second dimension is *Power distance*; perhaps related to Confucianism, aspects of this such as greater respect for elders is typically higher in eastern societies; this may include older pupils, such that (ab)use of power by older persons may be more likely to be seen as legitimate and not as bullying (Hofstede, 1980; P. B. Smith, Bond and Kagitçibasi, 2005). A third dimension is *Masculinity/femininity*, reflecting distinctive gender roles. In countries high on the masculine end of this dimension, males are expected to be more tough and aggressive. Thus higher bullying rates could be predicted especially for males; so a greater male-female difference in bullying rates.

A third aspect to consider in understanding the differences in reported bullying-like phenomena is that in these comparisons, pupils are asked about *ijime* or *wang-ta* or *bullying* (or other terms. . .). So, are the

reported differences actual differences in behaviour, or just differences between the meanings of the terms, so how *ijime* and *bullying* are interpreted in that culture? It is conceivable (if unlikely) that the behaviours are very similar in all these countries, and that the differences are due to the verbal labels we use for description. Some kinds of *bully* behaviours might not be seen as *ijime*, and vice-versa, so the reporting of the same behaviours might be different. Or, the behaviours may be different, irrespective of the verbal labels used. International comparative work is clearly faced with difficulties in finding terms in different languages to correspond to the English word *bullying*. The issue of comparability of terms is central for the accurate interpretation of national and cross-national findings. Although a definition of *bullying* or *ijime* may be given in questionnaires, pupils may actually respond to the usual meaning of the term used for bullying in their language.

The word *bullying* has Anglo-Saxon roots, and appears well understood in northern European languages, even though different words may be used, such as *mobbing*. In southern European countries, generally with Latin roots for the languages, there is no simple corresponding word for *bullying*, although there are words for violence and aggression – such as *prepotenza* or *violenza* in Italian. This issue had come to light earlier in comparisons among European countries. Use of the Olweus questionnaire in England and in Italy had suggested that rates of 'being bullied' are much higher in Italy than in England (Genta et al., 1996) – maybe by a factor of two. But in Italy, the term *prepotenza* was commonly used for *bullying* in these surveys. *Prepotenza* was suspected of having a broader meaning than *bullying*. In fact, in recent years Italian researchers and the media have co-opted the new term *il bullismo,* to fill this conceptual gap for a term similar to bullying (Fonzi, 1997; Genta, 2002; Menesini, 2000).

The Cartoon Test

The Cartoon Test was designed to find out more about how these different terms are understood. As part of an EC-funded program of research on bullying, the cartoon test was developed to explore these linguistic issues on a cross-national basis (P. K. Smith et al., 2002). This test used 25 stick figure cartoons, showing different kinds of scenarios between pupils, many hostile or 'bullying'. Altogether 14 countries participated, with 13 main languages: Austria (south Germanic dialect), China (Mandarin), England (English), France (French), Germany (German), Greece (Greek), Iceland (Icelandic), Italy (Italian), Japan (Japanese), Norway (Norwegian), Portugal (Portuguese), Slovenia

Table 14.2 *Loadings of bullying-related terms from different countries, on five clusters from the cartoon test (details in text).*

Term	Non-aggressive	Physical aggression	Physical bullying	Verbal (direct + indirect)	Social exclusion
Bully	4	34	94	91	62
Prepotenze	10	71	92	86	90
Ijime	4	9	50	87	39
Wang-ta	3	12	58	82	47

(Slovenian), Spain (Spanish) and Thailand (Thai). This constituted 11 European and 3 eastern countries.

In each of the 14 countries, terms for bullying-like phenomena were found from dictionaries and researchers, and children's focus groups used to select 3 to 6 terms comprehensible to children aged 8 and 14 years. The cartoons were then shown to pupils in sequence, one term 'X' at a time, with pupils asked if each cartoon is an example of 'X'. This was designed to be a move towards a more emic approach – looking at terms used in each culture (such as *bullying*, *harassment*, *teasing* in English), and their individual profile of meaning – while retaining an etic component in relating these terms to a broad range of common pupil scenarios. Use of stick figures was intended to avoid particular cultural connotations (such as clothes, skin colour and appearance).

The research identified five main clusters of cartoons that got similar responses from the total sample: non-aggressive (4 cartoons), physical aggression (2 cartoons), physical bullying (with imbalance of power) (5 cartoons), verbal bullying (including rumour spreading as well as direct verbal attacks) (9 cartoons) and social exclusion (5 cartoons). As an example, Table 14.2 (top three rows) shows the weighting of *bullying*, *prepotenze* and *ijime* on these five clusters (from P. K. Smith et al., 2002).

All three terms score very low on the non-aggressive cartoons, as expected. *Bullying*, and *ijime*, is low on physical aggression. *Prepotenze* is confirmed as a broader term than *bullying*, with a much higher loading on physical aggression (fighting between equals) compared to either *bullying* or *ijime*. This probably explains the 'higher incidence' of 'bullying' in Italy when it was assessed by *prepotenze* in earlier studies.

Other studies using the cartoon task

Smorti, Menesini and Smith (2003) used the 25-cartoon set to compare parents' definition of children's bullying in a five-country comparison

(Italy, Spain, Portugal, England and Japan). Japanese parents saw the verbal and severe social exclusion cartoons as particularly high on bullying-related terms. Besides country comparisons, the cartoon test proved useful for other purposes. Menesini, Fonzi and Smith (2002) compared the attribution of meanings to terms related to bullying by teachers and pupils, in Italy. They found that there was agreement as regards cartoons showing physical aggression, but that cartoons showing social exclusion and gender exclusion were less often seen as, for example, *prepotenza* or *violenza*. Monks and Smith (2006) used a reduced set of cartoons to examine age-related differences and the role of individual experiences of peer victimization in the understanding of bullying in a UK sample. Age groups differed in how they characterised bullying; 4- to 6-year-olds and 8-year-olds used one dimension, a distinction between aggressive and nonaggressive acts, 14-year-olds and adults gave a two-dimensional solution, also distinguishing between physical and non-physical (social/relational or verbal) acts. There were no significant differences in how bullying was characterised between boys and girls, or between children involved or not involved in bullying roles.

Examining social exclusion further

Although both *ijime* and *bullying* are lower on physical aggression than physical bullying, and although both are high on verbal bullying, *ijime* surprisingly does not come out high on social exclusion (Table 14.2). This seemed in contradiction to both earlier conceptual work and empirical study, comparing Japan and England (Morita et al., 1999; Kanetsuna and Smith, 2002). But, did the 25-cartoon task capture the full reality of *ijime*? The kinds of social exclusion featured in this cartoon set were rather 'mild'. Three of the cartoons were to do with playing together: Matt won't let Lenny play today, Sebastian never lets Rob play, and Henry and his friends won't let Ray play with them (English male version); while two were gender-based: the girls won't let Mark skip with them because he's a boy, and the boys won't let Karen play football because she's a girl. These can be seen as more 'playground-based' than 'classroom-based', and they do not describe anything like whole-class 'shunning' as was described in case studies by Tanaka (2001) in Japanese classrooms.

Some more resolution of this apparent contradiction was found, when we pursued further research in South Korea. The original cartoon study (P. K. Smith et al., 2002) did not include Korean terms. Focus group work with South Korean pupils (Koo, 2005) established that three terms used most by them to describe bullying-type behaviours were (in order of frequency) w*ang-ta, jun-ta* and *eun-ta* (*tta* or *ta* means

isolation, being singled out). Using the cartoon test with South Korean pupils, Koo (2005) found a profile for *wang-ta* very similar to *ijime* (lower row of Table 14.2). Of the Korean terms studied, it has the closest profile to *bullying;* hence, this term was used in the Koo et al. (2008) survey. But *wang-ta* (like *ijime*) is surprisingly low on social exclusion, especially as the etymology of this Korean term embodies the idea of exclusion.

We therefore looked more closely at the five specific cartoons in the social exclusion cluster. Three showed straightforward social exclusion from games by same-sex classmate(s), but two showed exclusion on the basis of gender. These all seemed to join in one social exclusion cluster in western countries, but not in South Korea (nor in Japan, when we examined the original data set in more detail). We found that the two gender-based cartoons were seen as *bullying* in England (by 59% of pupils), but not as *ijime* in Japan (only 21% of pupils) or as *wang-ta* in South Korea (only 15% of pupils).

It seems that the previous method of cluster analysis used was culturally insensitive (the overall analysis being dominated by western data sets – 11 out of 14 countries; P. K. Smith et al., 2002). When these two gender-based items were removed, the loadings on the remaining three-item social exclusion cluster rose to 51% for *ijime* and 67% for *wang-ta*. But more fundamentally than just removing the gender-based items, what counts as or best represents social exclusion? The kinds of social exclusion featured in the cartoon set were not very severe. We decided that a cartoon set with wider cultural scope would be needed to encompass different and perhaps more severe kinds of social exclusion (e.g., whole class exclusion) seen in South Korea and Japan.

Another cultural issue was to explore the use of age/grade as a justification for making another pupil do something (for example, to see if this might be seen as *bullying* in England, but not as *ijime* in Japan). In addition, the cartoon set needed updating to new forms of bullying such as text message bullying (cyberbullying).

The expanded cartoon test

An expanded set of cartoons was assembled. The original 25 cartoons were retained (with a few minor wording changes), plus 7 new social exclusion cartoons; 4 new cartoons on abuse of age/grade position; 2 cartoons on new types of 'bullying'; 1 new ambiguous cartoon; and 1 new 'neutral' cartoon. Figure 14.1 shows two new, more classroom-based and arguably more severe, social exclusion cartoons. Figure 14.2 shows two of the new cartoons on abuse of age/grade. The full list of 40-cartoon captions is given in Table 14.3. The captions give female names

Table 14.3 *Captions for the modified version of the cartoon set (English set, female names; modifications in italics)*

 1 Helen and Jo don't like each other and start to *hit each other*.
 2 Tiffany starts to *hit* Wendy.
 3 Mary starts to *hit* Linda, who is smaller.
 4 Samantha starts to *hit* Fatima because she said Samantha was stupid.
 5 Hilary starts to *hit* Rosalind every break time.
 6 Serla tells Alison that, if she doesn't give her money, she will hit her.
 7 Sally and her friends start to *hit* Kirsty.
 8 *Natalie starts to hit Anne, who is in a lower-year-grade, because Anne disagreed with Natalie.*
 9 *Pamela and Emily hit each other playfully and laugh.*
10 *Delia makes her classmate Samantha carry her school bags every day.*
11 *Amanda makes Vicky, who is in a lower class, carry her school bags every day.*
12 Lara borrows Helena's ruler and accidentally breaks it.
13 Sharon takes Carol's ruler and breaks it.
14 Mary forgot her pen so June lends her one of hers.
15 Danielle says nasty things to Janet.
16 Ann says nasty things to Debbie every week.
17 Julia says nasty things to Lisa about the colour of her skin OR Julia says nasty things to Lisa about her way of speaking (note: this is original sanctioned alternative).
18 *Kerry walks with a stick until her injured leg gets better. Kathy says nasty things to her about it.*
19 Kim says nasty things to Victoria because she is gay.
    (note: it is understood that this cartoon is sometimes omitted)
20 Rosie makes fun of Mandy's hair. They both laugh.
21 Elaine makes fun of Sue's hair. Sue is upset.
22 *Wendy sends nasty text messages to Linda every break time.*
23 Emma asks Heidi if she would like to play.
24 *Stephanie insists on Estelle joining in their game, even though Estelle does not want to.*
25 Chloe won't let Denise play today.
26 Natalie never lets Jean play.
27 Jenny and her friends won't let Claire play with them.
28 *The rest of the team won't let Millie take part in a competition, even though she is one of the best players, because she is from a lower year group.*
29 *No one wants to be with Julia for a paired activity.*
30 *Jess does not have any friend in her school.*
31 The girls won't let Mark skip with them because he is a boy.
32 The boys won't let Karen play football because she is a girl.
33 *Classmates never speak to Reena because she is a teacher's favourite.*
34 *Lalitha and her friends won't speak to Ann because she wants to be with lots of people, and not just part of their gang.*
35 *Tatiana and her friends suddenly stop talking and stay silent when Karina enters the classroom.*
36 *Everyone in the class treats Tiffany as if she were not there.*
37 Keely tells everyone not to talk to Patricia.
38 *Anna tells everyone not to talk to Ros because Ros is very popular among the boys.*
39 Fran spreads nasty stories about Melanie.
40 *Susie writes nasty things about Jodie on the walls of the school toilets.*
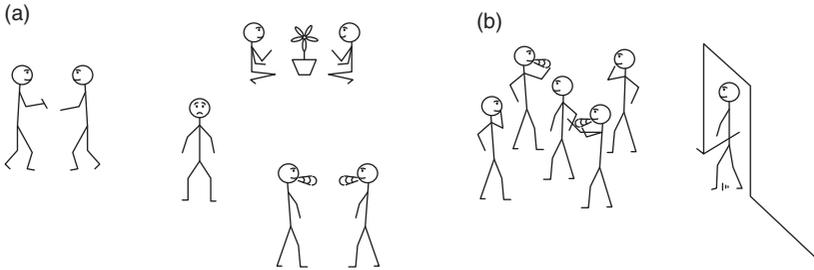
(a)

(b)

Figure 14.1 Two new social exclusion cartoons
(a) No one wants to be with Julia for a paired activity.
(b) Tatiana and her friends suddenly stop talking and stay silent when Karina enters the classroom.
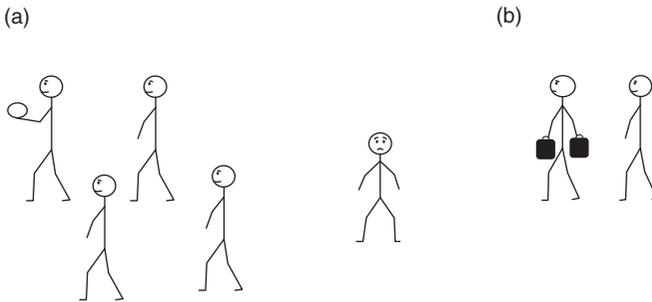
(a)

(b)

Figure 14.2 Two new abuse of age/grade cartoons
(a) The rest of the team won't let Millie take part in a competition, even though she is one of the best players, because she is from a lower year group.
(b) Amanda makes Vicky, who is in a lower class, carry her school bags every day.

from the English set; however, appropriate local names were used in each language, and male names were used with male pupils, or randomly with mixed sex classes.

The countries involved and terms used are shown in Table 14.4. A protocol for using the new set was devised and shared amongst everyone participating. First, the English cartoon captions were translated into the other language, for example, Japanese. Second, another person back-translated the captions into English, not knowing the original, and this was checked for fidelity (and any discrepancies discussed). Then in each

Table 14.4 *Details of samples and feedback on use*

Country/language	Number of pupils, and schools	Terms used	Feedback on task timing and attention	Feedback on suitability of cartoons
JAPAN Japanese	135; 3 schools in Chiba and Osaka	*ijime, ijiwaru*	too long for more than 1 term with 8-year-olds	text message and 'sexual orientation' cartoons not suitable for 8 years
SOUTH KOREA Korean	1,100; 10 schools in Seoul and provinces	*wang-ta, gipdan-gorophim, gipdan-ttadolim, pokryuk*	no problems, but a bit long for 8-year-olds	no issues
ENGLAND English	82; 2 schools in London	*bullying, harassment, teasing*	two terms enough for 8-year-olds	no major issues
CANADA English	86; 2 schools in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia	*bullying, teasing, being picked on*	two terms enough for 8-year-olds	'sexual orientation' cartoon not suitable for 8 years
ICELAND Icelandic	90; 2 schools in Reykjavik	*einelti, skilja ut undan, strida*	too long for 8-year-olds	no major issues
MAINLAND CHINA Mandarin	91; 3 schools in Shanghai	*qifu, qiya, wuru*	no problems	no major issues
HONG KONG Cantonese	142; 2 schools in Hong Kong	*ha yan*	tiring for 8-year-olds	captions long on 2 cartoons
PAKISTAN Urdu	120; 6 schools in Islamabad	*ghunda pan, tang karna, dhamkana*	no problems, they did not lose concentration	'sexual orientation' cartoon not suitable
TURKEY Turkish	124: 2 schools in Ankara	*zorbalik, dislamak, alay etmek, eziyet etmek, korkutmak, taciz etmek*	14-year-olds no problem, but 8-year-olds often said that some cartoons were very similar and it was long	'sexual orientation' cartoon omitted by researcher

country a small number of terms (usually 3 or 4) for bullying and social exclusion type behaviours were selected; this was done initially from dictionaries and thesauruses, questionnaires used and popular and academic writings, but followed up by focus groups with children (not taking part in the main study) to check on usage and broad understanding of terms. The cartoons were prepared on laminated cards, overhead transparencies or PowerPoint, and the set of 40 cartoons given to 8-year-olds and 14-year-olds from a 'normal' school (i.e. not a school for children with special needs; not a fee-paying school for financially well-off families). We aimed for a minimum of 40 pupils (20 boys and 20 girls) at each age. Investigators followed ethical guidelines appropriate for their own country/institution, but including informed consent from pupils and teachers/parents, rights to not answer or withdraw with no negative consequences, and an information sheet/help sheet and/or person available for help should the material bring up actual experiences of bullying/victimisation.

Each investigating team was asked to check how long it took to work through the forty cartoons for each term, and whether younger children especially lost concentration (and if so, when). They were also asked to debrief the pupils afterwards by explaining this is a new set of cartoon pictures, and ask pupils whether there were any cartoons or captions that were difficult to understand or that they had comments on. The data was gathered in the various countries between 2005 and 2007.

The feedback from the teams indicated that overall, the task took some 20–40 minutes with 8-year-olds, 10–20 minutes with 14-year-olds. The feedback on concentration is shown in Table 14.4. From this, it is clear that the task worked well with 14-year-olds, but not so well with 8-year-olds due to length, if several terms were used. As regards to feedback on the suitability of the cartoons (see Table 14.4), generally all seemed okay apart from cartoon 19 on sexual orientation cartoon ('Kim says nasty things to Victoria because she is gay'); in some countries this was not seen as appropriate, especially for 8-year-olds.

Here, we restrict the analysis to the data from 14-year-olds, given some difficulties in concentration with the 8 years olds. We present percentage 'yes' responses to selected cartoons, for the terms which appear closest to *bullying*: *Ijime* (Japan), *Wang-ta* (South Korea), *Bullying* (England, Canada), *Einelti* (Iceland), *Qifu* (China – mandarin), *Ha yan* (Hong Kong – cantonese), *Ghunda pan* (Pakistan – Urdu) and *Zorbalik* (Turkey). Data for nine cartoons of particular interest are shown in Table 14.5.

Table 14.5 *Some findings from use of an expanded version of the Cartoon Test in nine countries: cartoon caption, percentage 'yes' responses and comment, for eight cartoons.*

Ijime	Wang-ta	Bully Eng/Can	Einelti	Qifu	Ha yan	Ghunda pan	Zorbalik
Hilary starts to hit Rosalind every break time.							
93	28	100/98	87	77	93	95	82
Physical bullying: all terms score high, except wang-ta.							
Pamela and Emily hit each other playfully and laugh.							
0	9	2/0	6	9	9	5	6
Clearly not bullying: all terms score very low.							
The rest of the team won't let Millie take part in a competition, even though she is one of the best players because she is from a lower year group.							
29	49	81/69	64	46	62	77	46
Using age/grade as justification (1) lowest for ijime; highest for western terms.							
Amanda makes Vicky, who is in a lower class, carry her school bags every day.							
78	23	81/71	58	52	72	64	76
Using age/grade as justification (2) lowest for wang-ta.							
Jenny and her friends won't let Claire play with them.							
98	82	85/71	68	66	24	75	49
Social exclusion: all high except ha yan (and maybe zorbalik).							
The girls won't let Mark skip with them because he is a boy/the boys won't let Karen play football because she is a girl.							
25/27	33/35	88/90 51/53	28/28	11/27	14/16	31/19	40/41
Social exclusion by gender: low for eastern terms, only high for bullying.							
No one wants to be with Julia for a paired activity.							
76	85	56/36	56	32	14	56	31
Severe social exclusion (1): highest for wang-ta and ijime.							
Tatiana and her friends suddenly stop talking and stay silent when Karina enters the classroom.							
84	79	86/47	54	25	6	35	35
Severe social exclusion (2): high for ijime and wang-ta; also for bullying (England).							

Selected findings

The first row of Table 14.5 shows percentage responses for cartoon 5, Hilary starts to hit Rosalind every break time. So, for example, 93% of the 14-year-olds in the Japanese sample saw this as an appropriate example of *ijime*. Since this caption brings in the concept of repetition, it is also a good example of bullying (100% in England and 98% in Canada) and also of the terms in the other countries; with the interesting exception of South Korea, where only a minority of 25% saw this as an illustration of *wang-ta*. *Wang-ta* also scored relatively low in the physical aggression and physical bullying clusters in the earlier study (see Table 14.2), and it appears that it is weighted much more towards verbal and severe kinds of social exclusion.

The next row shows results for cartoon 9, Pamela and Emily hit each other playfully and laugh. This is an example of a control cartoon, to ensure that pupils do not just get in a set of saying 'yes' to every cartoon and to give a validity check. In fact, all scores are low on this ranging from 0% to a maximum of 9%.

The third and fourth rows show findings for cartoons 28 and 11; these are two new cartoons relating to abuse of age or grade level (Figure 14.2). For cartoon 28, The rest of the team won't let Millie take part in a competition, even though she is one of the best players, because she is from a lower year group, most pupils in England and Canada see this as *bullying*; so also do many pupils (around half or more) in the other countries, except Japan. Japanese pupils often do not see this as *ijime*, the score of 29% being noticeably the lowest (and less than the 49% for *wang-ta* in South Korea, and 46% for *qifu* in China). Interestingly, a different profile is seen for cartoon 11, Amanda makes Vicky, who is in a lower class, carry her school bags every day. This again is seen as bullying by most children in England and Canada, and a majority in all other countries, including Japan, with the exception here of South Korea, where only 23% see this was *wang-ta*. The example in cartoon 11 is more physical, and the example in cartoon 28 more exclusion based, which may explain the very different weightings for *wang-ta* here. In any event, it suggests that situations where age or grade is being used as a means of getting someone to do something they might not want to do (or not do something they would like to do), may not be seen so negatively in Japan or South Korea as in many other cultures, but depending very much on the kind of situations involved.

The final five cartoons in Table 14.5 show situations of social exclusion. Cartoon 27, Jenny and her friends won't let Claire play with them, was used in the original study. It scores quite highly for all countries, with

the notable exception of *ha yan* in Hong Kong (Cantonese), which appears to have a more physical meaning. It is also somewhat lower for *zorbalik* in Turkey, which has been shown to loads more on physical aggression and bullying, than on social exclusion (Ucanok, Smith and Karasoy, 2011). Cartoons 31 and 32, the two gender-based exclusion cartoons, are seen as *bullying* by most pupils in England, and a majority in Canada; but only by a minority in the other countries. This was predicted for the eastern cultures, but was a surprise for Iceland.

Cartoons 29, No one wants to be with Julia for a paired activity, and 35, Tatiana and her friends suddenly stop talking and stay silent when Karina enters the classroom, are two new and more classroom-based exclusion cartoons (Figure 14.1). Here, as predicted, there are high responses for both *ijime* in Japan, and *wang-ta* in South Korea. Scores are moderate in England, Canada and Iceland and in Pakistan. Interestingly, scores are low for *qifu* in mainland China and especially in Hong Kong, where as noted before, *ha yan* appears to be a term more relating to physical actions, and to be low on social exclusion generally.

Summary

The expanded cartoon test was found to be suitable for use, for 14-year-olds. The captions were understood, and the task held pupils' attention for the time needed to run through 3 or 4 different terms in the language. In some cultures, however, the cartoon about sexual orientation was considered not appropriate and was omitted. The task may be less suitable for 8-year-olds, especially if more than 1 or 2 terms are used.

Looking at some of the findings presented in Table 14.5, it seems that the term *bullying* is similar in meaning in England and Canada, though generally more inclusive in England (generally scores on the cartoons being higher, Table 14.5). There are considerable variations in meaning of terms corresponding to *bullying*; for example, *bullying* includes gender-based exclusion, but other terms do not. Of the eastern terms, *wang-ta* is low on physical bullying, but both *wang-ta* and *ijime* are high on severe social exclusion; by contrast, *ha yan* (and to some extent *qifu* and *zorbalik*) are low on social exclusion cartoons; *ijime* and *wang-ta* are low on some age/grade-related cartoons, but depending very much on the kind of situation depicted.

The terms shown in Table 14.5 are those that will often be used in definition-based questionnaires or surveys. It is apparent that equivalence between these terms is far from exact. Different terms pick up different weightings of physical, verbal and social exclusion items. Furthermore, the kinds of social exclusion will be weighted differently in

different societies. Also, situations where age or grade is used as justification, are viewed differently – sometimes seen as more acceptable in Japan or South Korea.

The historical dimension of this kind of research should be borne in mind; the meaning of words changes with time. This has been documented in South Korea by Lee, Smith and Monks (2012), where some new terms seem to be partly supplementing or replacing *wang-ta* as a term used by pupils. In Cantonese as spoken in Hong Kong, it appears that *ha yan* may be broadening in meaning to include social exclusion situations, quite possibly as a result of recent anti-bullying awareness raising in that city (see Chapter 7).

The study reported here can be regarded as pilot work, in the sense that the forty-cartoon set was being used for the first time, and (with the exception of South Korea) with relatively small samples. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that it can be a sensitive tool for examining cultural differences in meaning. Now put together several years ago, it might be even further expanded by some cartoons exemplifying different kinds of cyberbullying, which has diversified so much in the last few years (P. K. Smith, 2012). We clearly need to remain open to a combination of methodologies in studying bullying-like phenomena, and to be aware of the dangers of simplicity and ethnocentrism when making cross-cultural comparisons. Greater understanding in these areas will have implications for intervention strategies and help us understand how interventions in one country may need adaptation when tried in a different cultural context.

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