

Metastudy on the state of the art of the classification of cry-types

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1 Medical point of view

1.1 Crying as a Sign, a Sympton & a Signal (2000)

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Coupled with contextual information - the infant's facial expression and bodily movements and bodily movements, surrounding events and caregiving schedule - the sound of crying may be highly informative with respect to a discrete cause. [...]

1 Medical point of view

1.1 Crying as a Sign, a Sympton & a Signal (2000)

Summary:

It is not possible to infer the cause by the cry characteristics. Crying is described as a "graded signal" wich expresesses the level of distress of the infant. In combination with contextual informations, the level of distress expressed can aid in identifying the cause.

Detailed:

"We return now to the question asked at the outset: Are cry sounds of human infants unique to the eliciting condition - for example, hunger- pain- startle, or fatigue - and are they perceived uniformly and accuratlyas such by their caregivers? Such notions are widely shared in the clinical, research and popular literatures on infant crying, and many parents and other caregivers believe the answer to be "Yes". Nonethelesss, we have found little empirical support for such notions, and a great deal of evidence against them. The fundamental problem is that the sounds themselves appear not to be unitary and isomporphic with respect to discrete causes. [...]

Crying is different from other soundmaking and thus alerts the caregiver to the infant's distress. [...] Beyond alerting the caregiver, the sounds of crying convey level of distress or urgency of need. The probability of latency of a caregiver's response are thus affected. Level of Distress per se appears to offer some clue as to the specific cause of crying.