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More than Designing an Ethogram, The Implications of Choosing a Methodology in Primatology

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Abstract

All methodologies used to characterize mother-infant interaction includes mother, infant, and other social factors. The chief difference is how each methodology selects certain elements of this interaction as relevant. I will argue that in the context of the mother-infant interaction a methodology' s results depend on the model' s presuppositions on the nature of communication. These presupposition affects the kinds of questions asked, the kind of data obtained, and how these data are analyzed. I will show this by contrasting two different analysis of separation studies in infant primates: what I call the Ecological-Linear approach vs. Dynamic System Theory (DST) approach.

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