



From Mimicry to Trust: A Tinbergian Approach

Rapports

Informations projet

CoPAN

N° de convention de subvention: 804582

[Site Web du projet](#)

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Netherlands

Periodic Reporting for period 3 - CoPAN (From Mimicry to Trust: A Tinbergian Approach)

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Résumé du contexte et des objectifs généraux du projet

The current project aims to investigate the role of emotional expressions in daily life decision. Oftentimes, emotional expressions are mimicked. For example, when you see someone yawning, it is very likely that you will also get the urge to yawn. This is not just the case in humans, but it is also observed in other animals. But the big question is: why? What is mimicry good for? How does it work? How did it evolve? How does it develop? These are the four main research questions being addressed in the current project.

The importance for society is most obvious. Emotions are the core drivers of our actions and with their expressions, they influence others. Humans tend to think of themselves as rational beings, yet they are not. More than often, very important lifetime decisions are taken because they "feel good". Getting a better understanding of emotions and how they influence decisions, and social decisions during dyadic interactions in particular, opens the door to improvements in human cooperative actions and mutual trust development.

Travail effectué depuis le début du projet jusqu'à la fin de la période considérée dans le rapport et principaux résultats atteints jusqu'à présent

Experimental work:


Thus far, our research has yielded several new findings.


In a review article (Kret et al., 2020), we provide a fresh look on the emotion literature by comparing the human and great ape literature on emotional expressions. We come to the conclusion that in contrast to the field of primatology, psychologists often make use of acted emotions. This brings ecological validity issues to the table and makes comparisons challenging. What do people really express when they experience an emotion? We do give some answers in the review, but also provide a roadmap on how to continue research.

An empirical study by Behrens et al (2019) shows that face to face contact fosters cooperation. In a follow-up, it is shown that physiological synchrony between interaction partners plays an important role herein. How this works, exactly, is still not entirely clear, but it is likely that unconscious emotional cues such as pupil size and blushing may reflect arousal states. In different small experiments we zoomed in on contagious yawning (van Berlo et al., 2020); contagious scratching (Laméris et al., 2020), pupil mimicry (Aktar et al., 2019). With virtual reality we further aim to get a deeper understanding in the role of emotional mimicry during social interactions.

Dissemination:

The work has been published in scientific journals. Further, the PI has written a popular science book about this topic (in Dutch) which will appear in the bookstores the upcoming fall. The publisher is Atlas Contact.

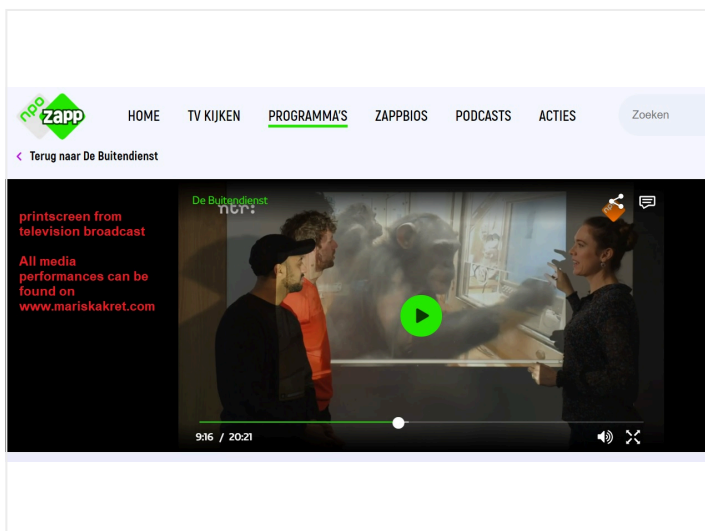
The research has been covered by national and international media (e.g. radio, television, newspapers). The full list can be found here: <https://www.mariskakret.com/media/> .

A new initiative has been launched to reach the general public: a lab on wheels, supported by the communities of Leiden and The Hague. Due to Covid, we have not yet created this yet, but a website is in the air where several dissemination activities are listed: <https://www.mariskakret.com/media/> .

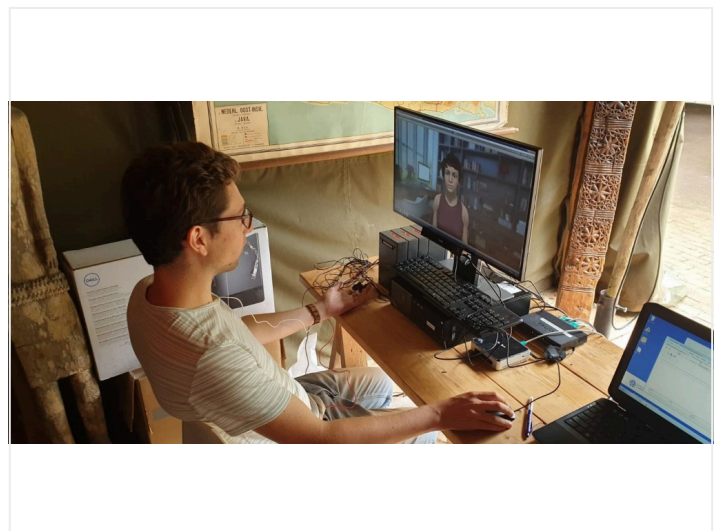
Progrès au-delà de l'état des connaissances et impact potentiel prévu (y compris l'impact socio-économique et les conséquences sociétales plus larges du projet jusqu'à présent) ✓

Due to COVID-19 the research of the ERC StG project CoPAN (no. 804582) cannot be carried out in the originally planned timeframe. Especially the dyadic interaction studies and the studies with great apes are currently difficult to perform. My team works hard to make the best of this situation and as can be seen in the project outcomes, with success. All staff has been hired for Work Packages (WP) 1, 3 and 4 but the postdoc on WP 2 has not yet been hired. An amendment has been submitted because I would like to start (and end) that project a full year later than planned, as it builds on WP1 and wait with hiring that new person. The new postdoc is supposed to carry out fMRI research which is also not possible now.

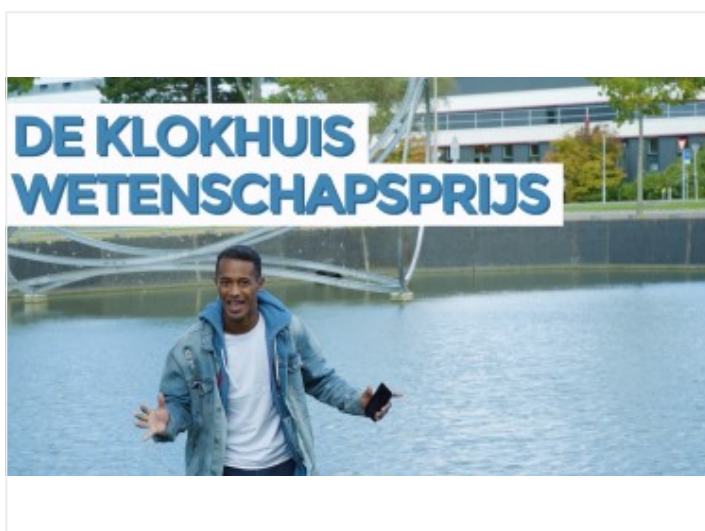
With this extension, I expect to be able to deliver all promised results.



TV programme about processing emotions in humans and apes



PhD student tests out VR pilot for Study 5



PhD student Chris Riddell nominated for Science Prize child Television programme

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Permalink: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/804582/reporting/fr>

European Union, 2025

