Because it matters to me: Differential emotion elicitation by experimental manipulation of self-relevance and goal conduciveness appraisals

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Based on Scherer’s (2001) Component Process Model and Gendolla’s (2004) elaboration of Motivational Intensity Theory, we investigated the prediction that motivation-based appraisals differentially determine emotional responding. Participants’ appraisal of self-relevance (low/high) and goal conduciveness (low/high) was experimentally manipulated using the success-failure manipulation (Nummenmaa & Niemi, 2004). Self-report indicated increased disappointment and embarrassment in the high-self-relevance/low-goal-conduciveness condition and increased amusement and pride in the high self-relevance/high-goal-conduciveness condition. Autonomic nervous system reactivity showed sympathetic discharge in response to self-relevance manipulation and respiratory and facial expressive changes in response to goal-conduciveness manipulation. Implications of results regarding motivational processes in emotion elicitation are discussed.