

Department of Psychology

Ayelet Boussi

Mentor: Eshkol Rafaeli

The Ways We Read Each Other: Micro and Macro Methods of Measuring
Empathic Accuracy in Dyadic Relationships

Empathic Accuracy (EA) is the degree to which an individual is able to infer the thoughts and feelings of another person correctly (Ickes et. al. 1995). Study of EA and its effects on relationships can be advanced by implementing multiple methods of measuring it; this study examines two such methods. The first replicates Ickes's paradigm, and is a “micro” approach utilizing immediate review of videotaped observations of couple interactions. In this method EA is operationalized as the correspondence of partner A’s perceptions of partner B’s thoughts and feelings with B’s actual self-reported thoughts and feelings. The second, a “macro” approach, makes use of daily diary (experience sampling) data from each partner. In this method EA is operationalized using the similarities in level, scatter, and pattern of the actual affective states (on the part of the target) and the perceived states (on the part of the perceiver) on a daily basis over three weeks. The data came from a multi-method study of 52 co-habiting couples.