

Abstract

Poignancy is defined as the experience of mixed emotions resulting from recognizing that something once possessed is no longer present. According to socioemotional selectivity theory, when people are aware of the finitude of time, they tend to experience more mixed emotions. Study 1 found that in contrast to the theory and prior western findings, Hong Kong older participants experienced a lower level of poignancy than did younger participants when they were asked to imagine visiting a meaningful place for the “last time”. In Study 2, we found that an emotion regulation strategy, namely cognitive reappraisal, moderated the relationship between time manipulation and poignancy, such that older participants who used cognitive reappraisal more were less likely to exhibit poignancy when imaging the social ending. Moreover, dialectical thinking mediated the relationship between age and poignancy, the age differences in poignancy was partially attributable to younger participants having a higher level of dialectical thinking than did older participants and those with a higher level of dialectical thinking experiencing more poignancy when imaging the social ending. Both the theoretical and practical implications of the finding are discussed.

Key words: poignancy, age differences, emotion regulation, dialectical thinking

摘要

悲喜交加 (Poignancy) 是由于意識到失去了曾經擁有的事物而產生的一種複雜的情緒體驗。根據社會情緒選擇理論 (Socioemotional Selectivity Theory)，當人們認識到時間的終結時，他們會更多的感受到這種複雜的情緒體驗。研究一發現，與理論以及過去一些西方研究相反，當要求被試 (participants) 想象最后一次去某個對他們來說有個人意義的地方時，相比于年輕人，香港老年人較少感受到這種悲喜交加的複雜情緒。研究二發現，認知重評 (cognitive reappraisal) 這一情緒調節 (emotion regulation) 策略起到了調節作用 (moderation)：當想象結束的情境時，更多使用這種策略的老年人會更少感受悲喜交加的複雜情緒。另外，辯證思維 (dialectical thinking) 起到了中介作用 (mediation)，思維更加辯證的被試會比較多的感受悲喜交加的複雜情緒。這一發現對於理論研究和實際應用都很有貢獻。

關鍵詞：悲喜交加，年齡差異，情緒調節，辯證思維