

Abstract

Past research about recognition of facial expression of emotion are not few. Yet, these studies mainly focused on cross-cultural issues, but the question of what element(s) of the face is/are significant to the emotion recognition remains unresolved. In order to understand the relationships between facial areas and facial expressions of the six basic emotions, the present study examined the validity of Paul Ekman's (1975) classification of the facial areas and investigated the relative effectiveness of different facial areas. In this study, 24 photographs of facial expressions were used and each of them were divided into three facial areas. By presenting these facial areas individually or presenting different combinations of these facial areas, 168 facial stimulus items was produced and recorded onto a video-tape. Then, 89 university students were asked to recognize the emotion(s) expressed from the facial stimulus items. Results supported that observers recognized the emotion most accurately when the full face was presented. It was found that importance of various areas of the face depended on what emotion was expressed. That means, certain area(s) of the face was/were found more important than other areas in conveying a specific emotion.