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PRELIMINARY STUDY OF EMOTION RECOGNITION USING FACIAL AFFECT CARDS OF THE TRAINING OF AFFECT RECOGNITION PROGRAM (TAR) IN SPANISH POPULATION

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Introduction: Social cognition is presently an important focus in rehabilitation of patients with schizophrenic psychoses. Emotion recognition in one of its different components, the Training of Affect Recognition (TAR) is a therapy program specifically developed aiming at improving affect recognition.

Objectives: To test if the material of the TAR program in terms a series of facial affect cards is reliable for emotion recognition in a Spanish control population.

Methods: A sample of Spanish control subjects were shown the TAR's series of facial affect cards. It includes the following emotions: happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, angry and disgust, and the neutral facial affect. Reliability was assessed by means of the kappa coefficient. Kappa values higher than 0.4 were considered reliable, the following criterion was accepted: kappa values < 0.4, low reliability; 0.4 to 0.75, moderate reliability; > 0.76, strong reliability.

Results: The sample was formed by subjects from the general population with no previous history of psychiatric disorders (n=20). The following kappa values were obtained: happiness, 0.8406 (CI 0.7744-0.9068), sadness, 0.6171 (CI 0.5377-0.6964), surprise, 0.6582 (CI 0.5859-0.7304), fear, 0.4509 (CI 0.3569-0.5448), angry, 0.6252 (CI 0.5464-0.7040), disgust, 0.7700 (CI 0.6943-0.8456), neutral, 0.5534 (CI 0.4663-0.6404).

Conclusions: In a preliminary study in a sample of 20 Spanish control subjects using the TAR's series of facial affect cards, the six basic emotions and the neutral facial affect were recognized with at least a moderate reliability. A strong reliability was obtained in happiness and disgust, and a moderate reliability in surprise, angry, sadness, neutral, fear.