

Recognition of made up face in patients with schizophrenia

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Non-verbal communication is important, especially in expressing emotion and intention of senders. Facial expression is probably most important in non-verbal communication. Recently, cognitive functions are considered as important factor to evaluate and improve social functioning of patients with schizophrenia. Facial recognition is supposed to be important for communication skill, but actually, there is little clinical evidence to prove that. We investigated the recognition of facial expression in 38 patients with schizophrenia and 28 normal subjects. We used two photograph sets of emotional faces and neutral faces, called Japanese and Caucasian facial expressions of emotion (JACFEE) and neutral face (JACNeuF), respectively. JACFEE consists of 28 photographs of 7 emotional expressions (anger, contempt, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, surprise). JACNeuF consists of 28 photographs of emotionally neutral faces. These sets of photographs were presented to the participants and they were required to tell the emotion expressed in the photographs from the word lists of emotions. Patients with schizophrenia exhibited significantly lower accuracy rate of recognition of facial expression. The low accuracy rate in schizophrenia was significantly correlated with low social activity, low language skills and severity of cognitive symptoms. The recognition of fear was mostly impaired in patients with schizophrenia. It was suggested that the emotional labeling test of facial expression could be a useful tool to evaluate social functioning in schizophrenia and that recognition of facial expression was closely linked to the psychopathology of schizophrenia. To predict social functioning in schizophrenia using this test, longitudinal clinical study will be required.