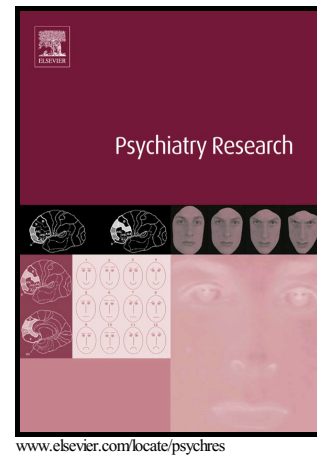


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Stella Tsotsi, Mary H. Kosmidis, Vasilis P. Bozikas



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Improved facial affect recognition in schizophrenia following an emotion intervention,
but not training attention-to-facial-features or treatment-as-usual.

Stella Tsotsi^{a,b1}, Mary H. Kosmidis^a, Vasilis P. Bozikas^{b*}

^aLab of Cognitive Neuroscience, School of Psychology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

^{b1st} Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

*Correspondence to: Hospital “Papageorgiou”, Ring Road Thessaloniki, N. Efkarpia, 54603 Thessaloniki, Greece. Tel.: +30 2313323151; fax: +30 2310991577.
vbozikas@med.auth.gr

Abstract

In schizophrenia, impaired facial affect recognition (FAR) has been associated with patients' overall social functioning. Interventions targeting attention or FAR *per se* have invariably yielded improved FAR performance in these patients. Here, we compared the effects of two interventions, one targeting FAR and one targeting attention-to-facial-features, with treatment-as-usual on patients' FAR performance. Thirty-nine outpatients with schizophrenia were randomly assigned to one of three groups: FAR intervention (training to recognize emotional information, conveyed by changes in facial features), attention-to-facial-features intervention (training to detect changes in facial features), and treatment-as-usual. Also, 24 healthy controls, matched for age and education, were assigned to one of the two interventions. Two FAR measurements, baseline and post-intervention, were conducted using an original experimental procedure with alternative sets of stimuli. We found improved FAR performance following the intervention targeting FAR in comparison to the other patient groups, which in fact was comparable to the pre-intervention performance of healthy controls

¹ Present affiliation: Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences, Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), Singapore

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