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TITLE: Face recognition and eye-movements: the factor of target and participant age

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Abstract

There is considerable debate in the literature regarding the differences between how older and younger people recognize faces. This study will attempt to bridge the gap between face recognition, eye-tracking and ageing. As per the paper by Henderson et al (2005), we had subjects learn faces in one of two conditions: 'fixed-view' which restricted subjects gaze to a small window on the face, and 'free-view' with no such restrictions. Subjects were then tested on their memory in either a fixed or free-view condition once again. This creates four groups denoting study condition and test condition: fix-free, free-free, fix-fix, and free-fix. The results indicate that overall younger faces appear to be easier to discriminate irrespective of participant age. As well a predicted false alarm increase in the older group was not evident; however there did seem to be an interaction of face age and participant age in terms of the false alarms. Generally there did not seem to be any difference in the reaction times of the two groups.