

TRAJECTORY OF EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF FACIAL EMOTION RECOGNITION IN TYPICALLY DEVELOPING CHILDREN

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Abstract. 118 children ranging from 3 years and 10 months to 4 years and 4 months old and 118 children ranging from 5 years and 11 months to 6 years and 3 months old were studied with a Facial Emotion Recognition Task (FERT) with the aim to verify the hypothesis that emotion recognition abilities develop during the period of preschool age. The test required children to recognize the facial emotion expressions of the six basic emotions (anger, sadness, fear, disgust, surprise and happiness) based on naming them orally by the experimenter one by one. The results showed significant differences in the performance of facial emotion recognition task between 3-4 year old and 5-6 year old typically developing children, suggesting age-related improvement of the overall accuracy in facial emotion recognition, as well as of the recognition accuracy for all studied emotion categories, with significantly most prominent positive change for sadness and disgust, and the weakest change for happiness.

Keywords: facial emotion recognition; preschoolers; early development.

The article can be cited as follows:

Asenova, I., Kourti, M. (2021). Trajectory of Early Development of Facial Emotion Recognition in Typically Developing Children. *Psychological Research*, Volume 24, Number 2, 160-167. ISSN 1311-4700 (Print); ISSN 2367-9174 (Online).

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Ivanka Asenova – abstract, introduction, theoretical background, methodology, discussion, conclusion.

Maria Kourti – introduction, data processing, results, references.

Submitted – May 2021

Revised – July 2021

Published – September 2021

The authors have read and approved the final manuscript.