Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Maestría en Ciencias (Neurobiología)
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Correlatos neurales de la percepción emocional por análisis de patrones en multitud de voxeles de datos de resonancia magnética funcional

Tesis presentada para optar por el grado de:
Maestro en ciencias

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México, noviembre 2018

I, AUTHORNAME confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

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Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

API	**A**pplication **P**rogramming **I**nterface
JSON	**J**ava**S**cript **O**bject **N**otation

Chapter 1

Introduction

Emotions are conscious states characterised by their discreteness, mild-to-marked arousal, hedonistic load[1] and a reference to a organismically relevant somatic state.[2](Schacter et al. 2011)(Ekman & Davidson 1994) Emotions as basic as happiness, fear, anger and sorrow are probably among the most basic subjective experiences; and whose behavioral manifestation is traceable to at least analogous reactions in all living organisms.[3]

It is for this very basal nature and the role of the nervous system in supporting them that emotions not only interfere with and modulate higher-order cognition, but also provide the most fundamental basis for motivation, and therefore planning and behavior.(Schwarz 1990) Emotions are causally connected to various responses in the peripheral nervous system (both somatic and autonomic) and endocrine activity. Memory formation can no longer be understood without the participation of distinct mechanisms which are emotion-selective.(LeDoux 1994)

[1]Unlike, for instance, the (dis)pleasureless experience of a vivid color or propioceptive information.

[2]Unlike, say, the exquisite smell of flowers. (Damasio 1996) uses the term "somatic" as opposed to "bodily" to convey the sufficiency of mental bodily *representations*.

[3]Some authors use the word "emotion" for the behavioral response and reserve the word "feeling" for their subjectively felt counterpart.

1.1 To Do

- Medical importance of emotion on a personal level: personality, extended depression, phobias, other psychiatric conditions?
- Social significance: theory of mind (i.e., other minds, mind-mind theory)
  - Faces as the epitome of ecologically relevant emotional signaling.
- Evolutionary importance:
  - Automatic emotional processing hypothesis: if facial expression is so important a *signal* of inner mental states for a social species like ours, it stands to reason that a cognitive adaptation could have evolved to process it separately of attention.
  - Negative valence bias hypothesis

Chapter 2

Previous Research

2.1 For automatic emotion identification

The affective priming paradigm(Klauer et al. 2003) is known to produce an effect on reaction times or accuracy for subsequent identification of congruent emotions, thereby reflecting variability in the processes leading to affect recognition.(De Houwer et al. 2009) Many lines of evidence help extrapolate this fact into the notion that affect identification can undergo an automatic or preattentional mode:

- Because affective priming occurs only under short stimulus onset asynchrony (SOA) times[1] (300 ms or less), it has been conjectured that its processing must occur before the direction of attention and response strategies take place.(Moors & De Houwer 2006)(Hermans et al. 2001)

- The effect is observed even when the prime is presented at unrecognizable subthreshold levels(Draine & Greenwald 1998) and outside the focus of visual attention(Calvo & Nummenmaa 2007).

- According to some reports, cognitive load (as produced by the simultaneous presentation of irrelevant tasks) does not impair affective priming.(Hermans et al. 2000) This is disputed, though (see next sections).

[1]The time lapse between prime and target stimuli presentation.

2.1.1 Valence/emotion-dependent automatism

A further refinement proposes that not all emotions were created equally advantageous to recognize. If natural selection produced complementary high-priority neural circuitry for the processing of facial expressions, one could naturally ask whether this automatism also targeted some emotions more than others based on survival advantage. Indeed, a wealth of research has found that the priming effect, as well as others, are biased towards averse and pejorative emotions, as opposed to happy or neutral ones.(Fox et al. 2002)(Vuilleumier et al. 2001)(Ishai et al. 2004)(Vuilleumier 2005)(Susa et al. 2012)

2.2 Against automatic emotion identification

Contrary to the previous view, Pessoa and colleges (Pessoa et al. 2002) interpreted the increased activity in relevant structures (fusiform area, amygdala, etc.) during explicit attention to facial features (in contrast to non-expressive details inscribed in the faces) as evidence that facial processing is contingent upon attention. This strand of facial emotion processing research is not without more recent supporters. See (Ochsner & Gross 2005)(Eimer et al. 2003) for instance.

2.3 Perceptual modulation through spare attention: a possible bridging explanation

Seemingly contradictory results stemming from methodologically sound studies cry for a theoretical reformulation to encompass all the facts. Research around the conflict often resorts to some sort of interaction and modulation between systems to explain the data.(Okon-Singer et al. 2007)(Palermo & Rhodes 2007) Sassi and colleges proposed that even though emotional perception can be turned automatic, unused resources might still be consumed in parallel, should the distracting task not be distracting enough.(Sassi et al.

2014)

Chapter 3

Justification

¿son aportes teóricos, metodológicos, empíricos...?

3.1 General

- Despite the initial success of neuroscience identifying and describing molecular and cellular underpinnings of many medical and psychological phenomena;[1] both the methods of "small-to-middle-scale" neuroscience and plain *localizationism* yield against a number of questions. Many known cognitive phenomena[2] rather emerge (or are thought to do so) from the coordinated physiology of anatomically distributed components. Evolutionary constraints pose limits on the number of nervous specializations that could univocally correspond to the performance of a function, so that certain behavioral and mental phenomena must correspond to the differential recruitment and modulation of more basic resources at the physiological domain.[3] Moreover, modern views on cognition place emphasis on the consideration of the interactions of organisms with one another and their environment.[4]

[1] Which?
[2] Which?
[3] Citation needed. Gazzaniga's book?
[4] Citation needed.

- Emotions are regarded as some of the most basic wholesale conscious experiences; in the sense that they are well-differentiated, universally expressive, and inextricably connected to somatic states and homeostasis.(Damasio 1998) Helping understand their third-person detection and processing contributes to our understanding of intersubjectivity, and (hopefully) of subjectivity by inclusion.

- As of today, neuroscientists and clinicians are heavily dependent upon verbal reports and other behavioral cues to asses mental states. More work is needed to help bridge the explanatory gap between mechanistic (i.e. physical) facts and subjective (i.e. mental) ones.

3.2 Particular

- Alexithymia patients, autism? Possibility of more accurate and faster diagnostics, cross-validation among expert knowledge, neuroimaging, etc.

- The ongoing debate surrounding the cognitive mechanisms of facial expression perception will benefit from extra evidence, and more importantly, extra analysis techniques to derive the requisite evidence.[5]

- Multivariate and nonlinear methods have proved successful in the past extending the identification of more complex brain activity interactions which aren't amenable to the traditional regression models.

3.3 Methodological justification?

Functional magnetic nuclear resonance is able to record a correlate signal of local field potentials from wide brain volumes, while providing sufficient spatial and temporal resolution to differentiate their activity. It is suitable

[5]Is the use of MVPA novel in the facial expression recognition literature? Mention if so

for exploratory studies in which task-related zones must be first identified, so as to lay the groundwork for finer-grained measurement techniques.

Chapter 4

Hypothesis

4.1 Research Question

Are there different modes of facial emotion perception (with or without attention, valence-dependent)?

4.2 Hypotheses

- Working hypothesis (H_1): the putative modes of facial expression processing should be correlated to differential spatio-temporal activity patterns at associated brain areas.
- Null hypothesis (H_0): no significant statistical dependence can be found between perception (i.e., processing) of facial expression under different conditions and activity patterns in the brain.

4.3 Predictions

If the occurrence of "automatic" (i.e. preattentive) or valence-dependent facial emotion processing goes hand-in-hand with a neural activity substrate, a powerful-enough statistical method (such as multivariate classification)

should be able to discriminate said neural activity. This assumes our measurements will be able to capture the relevant signal.

Chapter 5

Goals

- Study the biological basis of emotion perception at the bigger scale of whole-brain functional networks of neuronal ensambles.
- Dissociate the proposed plethora of phenomena that has been traditionally grouped under facial emotion perception. Find and test reliable psychological, imaging and computational methods to achieve that goal.
- As a natural consequence of the newfound descriptive and explanatory power contingent upon the previous point: be able to leverage the resulting methods to predict the occurance of distinct emotion perception workflows from functional imaging data alone.
- Help settle the debate surrounding the existence of more automatic pathways in the processing of emotional imagery, by contributing extra evidence coming from a representative and controlled fMRI study, as well as rigurous analysis and state-of-the-art pattern analysis techniques.

Chapter 6

Sample

- 45 subjects
  - age
  - sex
  - handedness?
- this is our actual experimental sample: 3 fMRI sequences each (different contrasts, specify design matrix in #Materials and Methods)
  - 126 stimulus-response cycles each.
  - **why do NULL (non gazing) cycles have a different "weight" on e-prime?**
- Anatomical reference coregistry (some lack sagital T1 FSPGR BRAVO, but Axial alternative seems to be good enough to allow for atlas transformations).

Chapter 7

Materials and Methods

Notwithstanding preattentive emotional face perception, the appearance of a face with a lateralized gaze tempts the human visual system to shift attention towards the suggested direction; presumably because relevant environmental and social information is likely to be discovered where others look at. The abrupt attentional shift is well within the fast interval range of a saccade movement. This phenomenon is known as *gaze cuing*, and has been used to measure neural correlates of visual attention and its interplay with emotion perception.(Friesen & Kingstone 1998)

The present study relied on a variation on the gaze cuing paradigm to obtain sequences of functional brain images under contrasting conditions. Each recording session was comprised of 126 stimulus-response cycles, where averted-gaze cycles were interleaved with control (i.e. direct-gaze) ones in order to study reorientation of visual attention in conjunction with affective perception. On the other hand, each of the three sessions tested for the effect of emotional valence (either positive or negative) against a neutral expression. This is further explained in figure 7.1: a markovian discrete-state system diagram showing a repeating $\langle gaze\ cuing,\ contrast \rangle$ unit, except that the multitude of specific face photographs have been abstracted away.

- Mention Federica's and previous findings using EEG? that would beg for introducing gaze cuing in the #Previous Research section.

- Block, event, mixed?
- MRI: attach notes from Concha's lectures in order to introduce MRI?
  - sequence used, parameters (from XNAT)
  - image processing pipeline
- statistical analysis, predictive models: regression as a rudimentary form of classification

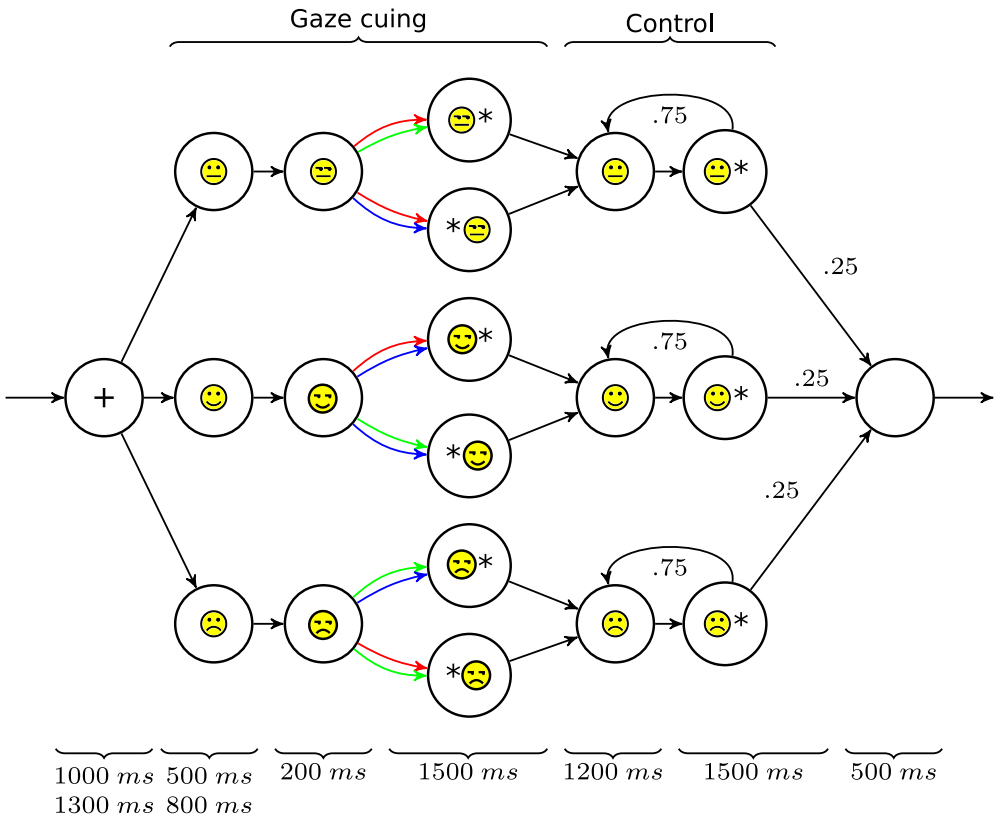

Figure 7.1: Gaze cuing paradigm. Nodes represent visual stimuli, their order of presentation is indicated using arrows. Unless noted otherwise, transition probability from a node is equally distributed among all exit arrows. Participants were asked to attend for a target (asterisk) and respond either "left" or "right" depending on its position relative to the face. Colorful arrows indicated that such combinations of emotion followed by a gaze-congruent or gaze-incongruent target were specific to one of the three sessions.

Chapter 8

Results

Chapter 9

Discussion and Conclusion

9.1 Discussion

9.2 Conclusion

9.2.1 Thesis summary

9.2.2 Future work

(1)

$$f(x) = ax^3 + bx^2 + cx + d$$

For syntax highlighting in code blocks, add three "‘" characters before and after a code block:

```
mood = 'happy'
if mood == 'happy':
    print("I am a happy robot")
```

Alternatively, you can also use LaTeX to create a code block as shown in the Java example below:

Listing 9.1: Main.java

```java
/**
 *  Hello, world - example in Java.
 */
public class Main{
    // says hello to the world
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        System.out.println("Hello, world!");
    }
}
```

Figure 9.1 shows how to add a figure.

Table 9.1 shows us how to add a table. Integer tincidunt sed nisl eget pellentesque. Mauris eleifend, nisl non lobortis fringilla, sapien eros aliquet orci, vitae pretium massa neque eu turpis. Pellentesque tincidunt aliquet volutpat. Ut ornare dui id ex sodales laoreet.

Table 9.1: This is the table caption. Suspendisse blandit dolor sed tellus venenatis, venenatis fringilla turpis pretium.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Row 1	0.1	0.2
Row 2	0.3	0.3
Row 3	0.4	0.4
Row 4	0.5	0.6

Figure 9.1: RV Calypso is a former British Royal Navy minesweeper converted into a research vessel for the oceanographic researcher Jacques-Yves Cousteau. It was equipped with a mobile laboratory for underwater field research.

Appendix 1: Some extra stuff

Add appendix 1 here. Vivamus hendrerit rhoncus interdum. Sed ullamcorper et augue at porta. Suspendisse facilisis imperdiet urna, eu pellentesque purus suscipit in. Integer dignissim mattis ex aliquam blandit. Curabitur lobortis quam varius turpis ultrices egestas.

Appendix 2: Some more extra stuff

Add appendix 2 here. Aliquam rhoncus mauris ac neque imperdiet, in mattis eros aliquam. Etiam sed massa et risus posuere rutrum vel et mauris. Integer id mauris sed arcu venenatis finibus. Etiam nec hendrerit purus, sed cursus nunc. Pellentesque ac luctus magna. Aenean non posuere enim, nec hendrerit lacus. Etiam lacinia facilisis tempor. Aenean dictum nunc id felis rhoncus aliquam.

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