

Psychophysical investigation of factors affecting facial attractiveness

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Two experiments were conducted in order to investigate the psychological factors affecting attractiveness on composite faces. Feminized or juvenilized Japanese faces were created by morphing between average male and female adult faces or between average male (female) adult and boy (girl) faces. In Experiment 1, the participants were asked to rank the attractiveness of these faces. The results showed moderately juvenilized faces to be highly attractive. In Experiment 2, we analyzed the impressions on the composite faces by the semantic differential method and determined the factors that largely affected attractiveness. Based on the factor scores, we plotted the faces in factor spaces and analyzed the locations of attractive faces. We found that most of the attractive juvenilized faces involved impressions corresponding with the augmentation of femininity characterized by the factors of “elegance”, “mildness”, and “youthfulness”, which the attractive faces potentially had.