New Methods for Studying Aging and Socioemotional Perception

Discussant
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Outline of Discussion

• Global View
• Specific Feedback
• Future Directions
Global View

• Redefining accuracy in interpersonal perception

• Coming at the problem sideways

• Focus on ecological validity

Rich
Creative
Clever
Thought-Provoking
Redefining Accuracy
Matching the self-report of the target

Rapport (Vicaria)
Personality (Vicaria)
Emotion – anger, pride, interest... (Vicaria)
Personality - Extraversion (Castro)
Personality - Conscientiousness (Castro)
Personality - Neuroticism (Castro)
Personality - Openness (Castro)
Personality - Agreeableness (Castro)

Well-Being (Castro)
Education (Castro)
Health (Castro)
Emotion – angry (Wieck)
Emotion – sad (Wieck)
Emotion – happy (Wieck)
Organizing the Findings
Perception Accuracy

No Age Differences
- Emotion – happy (Wieck)
- Emotion – angry (Wieck)
- Personality – Consc. (Castro)
- Personality – Neur. (Castro)
- Personality – Open. (Castro)
- Personality – Agree. (Castro)
- Personality (Vicaria)
- Well-Being (Castro)
- Education (Castro)
- Health (Castro)

Older Worse
- Emotion – pride…(Vicaria)
- Emotion – sad (Wieck)
- Personality – Consc. (Castro)
- Personality – Neur. (Castro)
- Personality – Open. (Castro)
- Personality – Agree. (Castro)
- Personality (Vicaria)

Older Better
- Personality – Extra.* (Castro)
- Rapport (Vicaria)
Organizing the Judgment Types

Complexity

Emotion – angry (Wieck)

Well-Being (Castro)

Personality (Vicaria)

Rapport (Vicaria)

Emotion – sad (Wieck)

Education (Castro)

Personality (Castro)

Emotion – happy (Wieck)

Health (Castro)

Emotion – pride... (Vicaria)
### Organizing the Judgment Types

#### Modalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynamic Facial</th>
<th>Dynamic Facial + Prosody</th>
<th>Dynamic Facial + Prosody + Verbal</th>
<th>Live Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotion – pride... (Vicaria)</td>
<td>Emotion – angry (Wieck)</td>
<td>Well-Being (Castro)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personality (Castro)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Organizing the Judgment Types

Modalities

OA Worse
OA = YA
OA Better

Dynamic Facial
Dynamic Facial + Prosody
Dynamic Facial + Prosody + Verbal
Live Interaction

Emotion – pride... (Vicaria)
Emotion – angry (Wieck)
Emotion – sad (Wieck)
Emotion – happy (Wieck)
Well-Being (Castro)
Education (Castro)
Health (Castro)
Personality – Extra.* (Castro)
Personality – Others (Castro)

Nonverbal Only
Nonverbal + Verbal
Some Specifics
Vicaria & Isaacowitz

• Fewer age deficits for unrehearsed stimuli
• Overall lower accuracy for unrehearsed stimuli?
  – More subtle or complex
  – More ecologically valid
  – Any evidence that labeling is an important component for accurate perception?
    • Does language restrict performance/accurate reporting? (Barrett)
• Rapport Judgment
  – Own-age bias?

• Is there a differential value for over versus under estimation of rapport?
  – ANOVA on difference scores –
    • YA underestimate more
    • OA targets are more likely to be underestimated
  – Conservative or humble to underestimate rapport?

• What do you think your partner thought your rating was? Could go on forever.
Castro, Vicaria, & Isaacowitz

- Thin slice judgments
- High in ecological validity
- Included middle-aged perceivers
- Theory testing or theory building?
- MA are leaky targets but inaccurate perceivers?
  - MA is most relatable for all perceiver age groups
- OA targets
  - Low accuracy for extraversion and openness
  - Stereotypes of older adults
    - Age differences in reported levels of extraversion
    - Lay theories about presence of extraversion in the population and in each age group
Castro, Vicaria, & Isaacowitz

• Wonder if perceivers approached the task as a “set”
  – Order effects – I rated the last person as extraverted so this person is less likely to be extraverted.
  – Would be interesting to see if only viewing one video each changed these associations
  – If they viewed videos in different random orders could also look at first video for each perceiver.
• Brunswikian approach
• Multiple modalities – facial and prosodic
• Ecologically valid stimuli

• Age-related changes in the physiognomy of the face or pitch of voice that mislead?
  – OA targets might produce fewer valid cues to emotion ... or at least that are less likely to match the schema for that emotion (young-adult biased)
  – Very interesting if perceivers adapt judgments based on target age.
Wieck, Nestler, & Kunzmann

• Emotion-based approach
  – Arousal levels of different emotions

• Impressive analysis
  – No assumptions need to be made about the validity of the cues – testing it! (are different targets providing different cues? – can test this!)
  – Whole greater than the sum of its parts
    • Holistic impression
    • Are people able to fully report on ALL of the cues they use when making a judgment?
• What was the confusion with sadness for older adults?
  – Anger or happiness?
  – Evidence of a “positive spin” by OA?
• Is it a labeling problem or a perception problem?
  – Would OA appropriately respond to a sad social partner (vs. angry vs. happy social partner)?
• Possibly OA experience and perceive a greater mix of emotions than YA?
  – Sad + angry
Future Directions
Future Directions

• Zoom out -- Expand focus to functionality?
  – Heuristics – good enough processing?
  – Relate to interpersonal outcomes
  – Skip labeling and test for appropriate responses to emotional cues

• Are there **age** differences in interpersonal perception accuracy?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Between Person Variables</th>
<th>Within Person Variables</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Abilities</td>
<td>Mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation/Goals</td>
<td>Confidence – item level?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Directions

• Many of the findings were correlations
  – Reporting significant/non-significant age differences in correlations
  – Might be interesting to also examine differences in the magnitude of the effects
  – Is there a meaningful “amount” of accuracy that is a threshold or good enough?
A Taxonomy of Theoretical Contributions for Empirical Articles

1. Introduces a New Construct
2. Examines Previously Unexplained Relationship or Process
3. Introduces Mediator or Moderator of Relationship or Process
4. Examines Effects of Prior Theorizing
5. Building New Theory

1. Logical Speculation
2. Past Findings
3. Existing Conceptual Arguments
4. Existing Models
5. Testing Existing Theory

High Theoretical Contribution
Low Theoretical Contribution

Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007
Theory

- Richness
- Fits Data
- Leads to novel insights

Eisenhardt, 1989
Thank You