Title
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Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9mj873tw

Journal
Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 43(43)

ISSN
1069-7977

Authors
Hsiao, Janet
Chan, Sherry Kit Wa
Chan, Antoni B.

Publication Date
2021

Peer reviewed
Eye movement consistency in global-local perceptual processing predicts schizotypy

Janet Hsiao
University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Sherry Kit Wa Chan
University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Antoni Chan
City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Yueyuan Zheng
University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Kam Man Lau
University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Hei Lam Michelle Tsang
University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Abstract

Here we examined whether eye movement measures in global-local perceptual processing tasks, where abnormalities were typically found in individuals with schizophrenia, could be used to predict schizotypy through Eye Movement analysis with Hidden Markov Models (EMHMM). Using both multiple regression analysis and Gaussian process classifier to predict schizotypy, we found that in addition to longer response times in contour integration, a less consistent eye fixation to locate a stimulus and a more consistent subsequent fixation to start engaging local processing in the embedded figures task predicted high schizotypy. These effects may be related to reduced top-down attention control due to deficient global processing and enhanced local processing bias respectively. In addition, performance in embedded figures could further enhance classification accuracy when being used in conjunction with the above predictors, suggesting the multifactorial nature of the identification problem. These predictors may be important endophenotype markers for schizotypal personality.