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**The Effect of Observers' Mood on Level of Processing of
Emotional Schematic Faces**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

The thesis examined the effect of mood on the processing of local details of emotional faces. In a series of experiments, this effect was investigated in different mood valences, intensities, and persistency. Happy, neutral and sad schematic faces were presented to happy or sad participants, who were asked to count particular features of the presented faces. It was assumed that the time needed to count the parts of each facial expression would reveal the ease of attentional resources allocation to the local elements of that facial emotion. The results showed that counting the parts of sad faces needed more time; it is likely that the global level processing of sad faces captured attention and interfered with fast access to local elements. The results also showed that higher intensity mood inductions (using music clips and recall tasks) and longer exposure to mood inductions might guide attention in different ways. Data showed that when happy and sad mood were induced in low intensity, attending to the local details was faster in happy mood compared to sad mood. On the contrary, when happy mood was experienced for a longer time, local processing was slower, although local processing was enhanced as the sad mood intensified or was experienced for longer period. This research concluded that the global interference effect is not a fixed phenomenon, but is influenced by contextual factors. Moreover, it was suggested that mood attributes (e.g., valence, intensity, or persistency) influence attentional strategies in processing of a compound shape.

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