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Facial expressions are not universal

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

The reading of facial expressions may not be universal. This is the conclusion of researchers from Glasgow University in Scotland. They report that people from different cultures read facial expressions differently. In particular, they said there were big differences between the way Westerners and East Asians interpret facial expressions. The study suggests East Asians focus mostly on people's eyes to read an emotion, but Europeans and Americans scan the whole face. Researcher Rachael Jack said: "We show that Easterners and Westerners look at different face features to read facial expressions." She added: "Westerners look at the eyes and the mouth in equal measure, whereas Easterners favour the eyes and neglect the mouth."

Ms. Jack suggested there are similarities in interpreting facial expressions and the use of emoticons. She said East Asians use the eyes in emoticons to show emotion, for example ^_^ means happy and ;_ ; is sad. Westerners, however, use the mouth. For example :) is for happy and :(is for sad. She added: "Interestingly, there are clear cultural differences in the formations of these icons. Emoticons are used to convey different emotions in cyberspace as they are the iconic representation of facial expressions." The researchers said their findings showed intercultural communication is more complicated than we thought. They said: "When it comes to communicating emotions across cultures, Easterners and Westerners will find themselves lost in translation."

WARM-UPS

1. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about facial expressions. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

expressions / universal / researchers / different cultures / emotions / Westerners / similarities / emoticons / cultural differences / cyberspace / things lost in translation

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. FACE-TO-FACE: How does your face communicate? Complete this table. Show what you wrote to your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard.

Facial feature	How this communicates	Is this strange?
Eyes		
Nose		
Mouth		
Eyebrows		
Tongue		
Lips		

4. ALL THE SAME: Students A **strongly** believe we're all the same; Students B **strongly** believe we're all completely different. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. CULTURES: How do people from these cultures communicate? Discuss this with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard.

- Americans
- Russians
- Arabs
- Chinese
- Maoris
- Japanese
- Kenyans
- Brazilians

6. FACE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'face'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. Facial expressions are the same all over the world. T / F
- b. People worldwide share the same way of reading facial expressions. T / F
- c. People from East Asia focus more on people's lips to read emotions. T / F
- d. A study says East Asians don't really look at other people's mouths. T / F
- e. The way we use emoticons is similar to how we read facial expressions. T / F
- f. East Asians show emotions in emoticons using symbols for the eyes. T / F
- g. Communication between cultures is easier than we thought it was. T / F
- h. The study suggests translation problems among cultures will continue. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. universal | a. put into words |
| 2. conclusion | b. look at |
| 3. interpret | c. believed |
| 4. scan | d. ignore |
| 5. neglect | e. read |
| 6. similarities | f. difficult |
| 7. clear | g. likenesses |
| 8. convey | h. common |
| 9. complicated | i. understandable |
| 10. thought | j. judgment |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. facial expressions may not be | a. the whole face |
| 2. read facial expressions | b. translation |
| 3. the way Westerners and East Asians interpret | c. are similarities |
| 4. Americans scan | d. universal |
| 5. in equal | e. differences |
| 6. Jack suggested there | f. measure |
| 7. East Asians use the eyes | g. differently |
| 8. there are clear cultural | h. facial expressions |
| 9. intercultural | i. in emoticons |
| 10. lost in | j. communication |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The reading of facial expressions may not be _____. This is the conclusion of researchers from Glasgow University in Scotland. They _____ that people from different cultures read facial expressions differently. In particular, they said there were big differences between the _____ Westerners and East Asians interpret facial expressions. The study suggests East Asians _____ mostly on people's eyes to read an emotion, but Europeans and Americans _____ the whole face. Researcher Rachael Jack said: "We show that Easterners and Westerners look at different face _____ to read facial expressions." She added: "Westerners look at the eyes and the mouth in _____ measure, whereas Easterners _____ the eyes and neglect the mouth."

features

focus

report

favour

scan

universal

way

equal

Ms. Jack suggested there are _____ in interpreting facial expressions and the _____ of emoticons. She said East Asians use the eyes in emoticons to _____ emotion, for example ^_^ means happy and ;_ ; is sad. Westerners, however, use the mouth. For example :) is for happy and :(is for sad. She added: "Interestingly, there are _____ cultural differences in the formations of these icons. Emoticons are used to convey different emotions in _____ as they are the iconic representation of facial expressions." The researchers said their _____ showed intercultural communication is more complicated than we thought. They said: "When it _____ to communicating emotions across cultures, Easterners and Westerners will find themselves _____ in translation."

comes

use

show

cyberspace

lost

similarities

findings

clear

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

The reading of facial expressions _____. This is the conclusion of researchers from Glasgow University in Scotland. They report that people from different _____ expressions differently. In particular, they said there were big differences _____ Westerners and East Asians interpret facial expressions. The study suggests East Asians focus mostly on people's _____ emotion, but Europeans and Americans scan the whole face. Researcher Rachael Jack said: "We show that Easterners and Westerners _____ features to read facial expressions." She added: "Westerners look at the eyes and the mouth _____, whereas Easterners favour the eyes and neglect the mouth."

Ms. Jack suggested there _____ interpreting facial expressions and the use of emoticons. She said East Asians _____ emoticons to show emotion, for example ^_^ means happy and ;_ ; is sad. Westerners, however, use the mouth. For example :) _____ :(is for sad. She added: "Interestingly, there are clear cultural differences in the formations of these icons. Emoticons are _____ emotions in cyberspace as they are the iconic representation of facial expressions." The researchers said their findings showed intercultural communication _____ than we thought. They said: "When it comes to communicating emotions across cultures, Easterners and Westerners will find themselves _____."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'facial' and 'expression'.

facial	expression

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• universal• differently• differences• suggests• added• neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• suggested• clear• convey• findings• thought• lost
--	--

STUDENT FACIAL EXPRESSIONS SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

Write five GOOD questions about facial expressions in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'culture'?
- c) Are you good at reading people's facial expressions ?
- d) Do you think people's facial expressions are the same all over the world?
- e) Are you good at hiding your true feelings?
- f) What are the biggest differences between Westerners and Asians?
- g) Do you think it would be interesting to research facial expressions?
- h) What do you think is the most expressive part of someone's face?
- i) Which do you think communicates better, body language or facial expressions?
- j) Why do you think a particular culture would focus more on the eyes or mouth?

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FACIAL EXPRESSIONS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you use emoticons when you send e-mails and text messages?
- c) What do you think of emoticons?
- d) What emoticons are used in your language?
- e) Are there similarities between emoticons and real facial expressions?
- f) Do you think intercultural communication is easy or difficult?
- g) Do you think different cultures have different emotions?
- h) What problems have you had communicating with different cultures?
- i) Have you ever had a problem because of translation?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Rachael Jack?

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LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0908/090817-facial_expressions.html

The (1) ____ of facial expressions may not be universal. This is the conclusion of researchers from Glasgow University in Scotland. They (2) ____ that people from different cultures read facial expressions differently. In particular, they said there were big (3) ____ between the way Westerners and East Asians interpret facial expressions. The study suggests East Asians focus mostly (4) ____ people's eyes to read an emotion, but Europeans and Americans scan the (5) ____ face. Researcher Rachael Jack said: "We show that Easterners and Westerners look at different face features to read facial expressions." She added: "Westerners look at the eyes and the mouth in (6) ____ measure, whereas Easterners favour the eyes and neglect the mouth."

Ms. Jack suggested there are similarities (7) ____ interpreting facial expressions and the use of emoticons. She said East Asians use the eyes in emoticons to show emotion, for example ^_^ (8) ____ happy and ;_; is sad. Westerners, however, use the mouth. For example :) is for happy and :(is for sad. She added: "Interestingly, there are clear cultural differences in the formations of (9) ____ icons. Emoticons are used to (10) ____ different emotions in cyberspace as they are the iconic representation of facial expressions." The researchers said their findings showed intercultural communication is (11) ____ complicated than we thought. They said: "When it comes to communicating emotions across cultures, Easterners and Westerners will find themselves (12) ____ in translation."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) readings | (b) read | (c) readers | (d) reading |
| 2. | (a) reporters | (b) report | (c) reporting | (d) reports |
| 3. | (a) differences | (b) different | (c) difference | (d) differently |
| 4. | (a) in | (b) to | (c) on | (d) at |
| 5. | (a) all | (b) every | (c) whole | (d) most |
| 6. | (a) equals | (b) equal | (c) equally | (d) equaled |
| 7. | (a) in | (b) on | (c) to | (d) at |
| 8. | (a) meaning | (b) meant | (c) mean | (d) means |
| 9. | (a) them | (b) these | (c) they | (d) that |
| 10. | (a) convey | (b) convenient | (c) convert | (d) convey |
| 11. | (a) most | (b) many | (c) more | (d) much |
| 12. | (a) lost | (b) loss | (c) losses | (d) loses |

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about facial expressions. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS: Make a poster about facial expressions (complete with drawings). Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: Write a magazine article about intercultural communication. Include imaginary interviews with one person who thinks it's difficult and another person who thinks it's easy.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Rachael Jack. Ask her three questions about facial expressions. Tell her three of your most-used facial expressions. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. F c. F d. T e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. universal | a. common |
| 2. conclusion | b. judgment |
| 3. interpret | c. read |
| 4. scan | d. look at |
| 5. neglect | e. ignore |
| 6. similarities | f. likenesses |
| 7. clear | g. understandable |
| 8. convey | h. put into words |
| 9. complicated | i. difficult |
| 10. thought | j. believed |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. facial expressions may not be | a. universal |
| 2. read facial expressions | b. differently |
| 3. the way Westerners and East Asians interpret | c. facial expressions |
| 4. Americans scan | d. the whole face |
| 5. in equal | e. measure |
| 6. Jack suggested there | f. are similarities |
| 7. East Asians use the eyes | g. in emoticons |
| 8. there are clear cultural | h. differences |
| 9. intercultural | i. communication |
| 10. lost in | j. translation |

GAP FILL:

Facial expressions are not universal

The reading of facial expressions may not be **universal**. This is the conclusion of researchers from Glasgow University in Scotland. They **report** that people from different cultures read facial expressions differently. In particular, they said there were big differences between the **way** Westerners and East Asians interpret facial expressions. The study suggests East Asians **focus** mostly on people's eyes to read an emotion, but Europeans and Americans **scan** the whole face. Researcher Rachael Jack said: "We show that Easterners and Westerners look at different face **features** to read facial expressions." She added: "Westerners look at the eyes and the mouth in **equal** measure, whereas Easterners **favour** the eyes and neglect the mouth."

Ms. Jack suggested there are **similarities** in interpreting facial expressions and the **use** of emoticons. She said East Asians use the eyes in emoticons to **show** emotion, for example ^_^ means happy and ;_ is sad. Westerners, however, use the mouth. For example :) is for happy and :(is for sad. She added: "Interestingly, there are **clear** cultural differences in the formations of these icons. Emoticons are used to convey different emotions in **cyberspace** as they are the iconic representation of facial expressions." The researchers said their **findings** showed intercultural communication is more complicated than we thought. They said: "When it **comes** to communicating emotions across cultures, Easterners and Westerners will find themselves **lost** in translation."

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - b 3 - a 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - a 8 - d 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a