

# Attractiveness of Facial Symmetry in the Context of the Dominant Visual Field

Slavka Demuthova<sup>1</sup>, Andrej Demuth<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia

<sup>2</sup>Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

## Abstract

One of the key features of an attractive face is symmetry. The presence of symmetry in living organisms reflects their ability to cope with various adverse environmental or genetic factors, thus a symmetrical face signals the hidden qualities of the organism. Despite the evolutionary basis for the attractiveness of facial symmetry, studies that have examined it have yielded diverse results. One reason may lie in the way that symmetrical faces have been manipulated in the research. The symmetrical stimulus faces are often composites that are created by using the mirror image of one half to create the other half, which can lead to contradictory outcomes. When evaluating human faces, the dominance of the left visual field (as a reflection of brain lateralisation functions) comes into play, which may modify the attractiveness of the composite depending on whether it was created as a left-sided mirror image (using the left half of the face) or a right-sided mirror image (using the right half of the face). The study aims to evaluate the attractiveness of left-sided and right-sided symmetrical facial composites and how the evaluator's visual field dominance affects the assessed attractiveness. The results suggest that left-sided facial composites are universally attractive, for both female and male faces. Furthermore, it is noted that visual field dominance is not related to the type (left-sided vs. right-sided) of symmetry or the evaluation of its attractiveness – individuals with dominant left visual fields as well as those with dominant right visual fields universally rate the left-sided composite as significantly more attractive than the right-sided composite.

**Keywords:** attractiveness, symmetry, dominant visual field, brain laterality