

Experts Say 'Emotion Recognition' Lacks Scientific Foundation

July 23, 2019

Emotion recognition is a hot new area, with [numerous](#) companies peddling products that claim to be able to read people's internal emotional states, and AI researchers looking to improve computers' ability to do so. This is done through [voice analysis](#), [body language analysis](#), [gait analysis](#), [eye tracking](#), and remote measurement of [physiological signs](#) like pulse and breathing rates. Most of all, though, it's done through analysis of facial expressions.

A new [study](#), however, strongly suggests that these products are built on a bed of intellectual quicksand.

The key question is whether human emotions can be reliably determined from facial expressions. "The topic of facial expressions of emotion — whether they're universal, whether you can look at someone's face and read emotion in their face — is a topic of great contention that scientists have been debating for at least 100 years," Lisa Feldman Barrett, Professor of Psychology at Northeastern University and an expert on emotion, told me.