

CHALLENGES IN DECODING AND OBSERVING THE (NON)VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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***Abstract:** IQ and EQ, trending terms in nowadays' research regarding the emotional intelligence, share opposite trends in terms of evolution, from generation to generation. Unlike the IQ, which tends to grow, EQ, while more and more in the spotlight, shrinks as generations pass. Through this theme's integrated EQ development program, the major aim is to highlight the correlation between emotional intelligence and personal life success; the relationship between different components of emotional intelligence and how the value system is structured; validating the effectiveness of an emotional intelligence development program. Our approach is supported by renowned psychological tests, a sociological questionnaire, as well as a semantic software program – Tropes. As per the contextual placement, one of the key elements that define the paper resides in the use of action phrases, placing their orientation in a dynamic environment. The key takeaways include the authentic and masked indicators paramount for a precise verbal and non-verbal analysis, as well as means to further develop the Emotional Intelligence.*

***Keywords:** emotional intelligence; nonverbal; verbal; semantic analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

All of us are born with certain genetic and attitudinal predispositions that being influenced by some factors concerning the dwelling environment and the received education, but also by the personal attitude, develop or not (remain in unconsciousness, as uncased resources or as vulnerabilities actively through stress, of different intensity). There are geneticists that launched the presumption that through our way of thinking, we may activate certain positive or negative genes that otherwise would remain latent. After many years of research, physician Kazuo Murakami (2012, page 56) also a Japanese professor and one of the most important geneticists in the world arrived at the conclusion that happiness, joy, inspiration, gratefulness and prayer may activate beneficial genes. We have personal or family problems and resources that have to be known and then solved in order to go on. Denial is not an adaptive attitude because it does not help us to overcome obstacles.

2. COMMUNICATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

William Damon (1988, page 99) mentions that although many researches have been performed in

this field, these are not known enough or are ignored and are not applied adequately. Emotional education including learning and modelling, in time effectively modifies the chemical processes at the level of the brain. Emotions are shaped as biochemical substances produced by the brain and then which the body invariably reacts to. Emotional education can be compared from this perspective to some foods effects, like ice-cream and chocolate that produce serotonin and endorphin. This idea is not new. For example, psychiatrist Michael Norton presents in his book Beyond Prozac, different methods of training the brain to produce serotonin through food control, physical training and sleep management.

Agitated and throbbing way of life equally predisposes adults and children to fury and irascibility, determining increase of preoccupation for developing some personal competences. Society evolution caused those emotions attribution to extend beyond the progressive level of human, as a species. The increase of delinquency and criminality caused us justly to fear of contacting people that we do not know well and to be isolated socially. Thus, we are alone in the middle of millions of people which we dwell with in the great world metropolises. We are not as lucky as the previous generations that have dwelt in united communities

in villages, in which people have known well each other and have supported mutually in trouble. In this context, to be able to develop and maintain a social network, to make friends, it is more important to build and chisel social skills. These are necessary also because inevitably, along the life we confront to different, subtle and complicated situations requiring flexibility, social competences and stress management in order to overcome these. Training the capacity to interpret the nonverbal language may improve significantly the chances of understanding others feelings and to react adequately in the interactions to others.

Not a few studies emphasize the fact that these social and emotional skills may influence the success in life more than the intellectual capacity. For this reason, we mention Allan Fornhan's article (1996) presenting in detail a study of Bell Labs that has arrived at the conclusion that social isolation, possibly caused by low EQ has been the most important factor leading to low work performances.

Contrarily, a high EQ determine children to be considered sedulous by teachers, to be liked by playground friends and helps adults at work and marriage. The first that have noticed the relevancy between EQ and school performances are school psychologists and academy teachers that also have helped to implementing Law 94-142 concerning education of children with special needs in USA (Shapiro, 2012:29-130). But then, IQ correlates with faculty entrance examinations. In no case, we do not have to consider EQ and IQ as opposite because these interact dynamically. Practically, the relation between cortex and limbic system defines EQ. Cortex allows us have feelings to our feelings. However, EQ seems to have a smaller genetic load, hence greater educational potential. Although we know more about emotional intelligence development possibilities, this decrease from a generation to another, unlike IQ that increases (Flynn Effect). Many justifications were found to explain this fact: so many divorces, Internet and media influence and the fact that busy parents spend less time with their children.

In time, work relations seem reminiscences of those in the playground. Playground becomes the conversation place in a company that is used for gossip, but also for important work information exchanges, where advice are asked and help is received or not, depending on everybody's emotional competences. Social skills are an important component of emotional intelligence. These involve many features that can be developed: empathy, assertiveness etc. In this article, we'll focus on two of them: capacity of interpreting the

nonverbal and verbal communication, both very useful in people relations.

Nonverbal communication is the plurality of messages, unexpressed in words and decipherable, making meanings. These signals can repeat, contradict, replace, supplement or emphasize the message sent through words. Even though this subject is back, the preoccupation of deciphering and using optimally the nonverbal language is not new. For example, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (35-96 d.Hr.), considered the first rhetoric teacher in Antic Rome, dedicated one of the twelve volumes of *Institutio oratoria* (Training of Speaking in Public) to pronunciation- voice and gestures.

Before 20th century, Charles Darwin was one of the most important scientist approaching this subject, publishing his remarks, opinions and conclusions in his book published in 1872, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*. Most of the expressed opinions subsequently were validated by different researchers (Pease,1997:27). Man, like other species, obeys some biological laws, controlling his behaviour, reactions and gestures, even if many of us are not conscious of what we transmit or it is communicated to us beyond words. There are not a few cases that certain persons are considered intuitive because they know when they are lied to, because they notice interlocutor's intentions, even if he/she tries to hide these. An explanation of this intuition can be these people capacity of noticing and interpreting nonverbal language.

Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees in 1956 (:89), were the first authors that included the nonverbal communication term in the title of a book. These mentioned that in human communication seven different systems are involved, five of them are nonverbal: aspect and clothes; gestures or voluntary moves; random actions; actions effects; vocal sounds; spoken words and written words. Many scientists share the idea that verbal communication is used mainly to send information and nonverbal communication is used for expressing emotions and attitudes that can be in accordance or in contrast with verbal information, sometimes replacing these (Pease, 1997:29). Many a time, a certain look may replace a multitude of words, transmitting everything we want to know concerning a person's attitude to another. Our posture when we talk to somebody, the way we move our hands, eyes, legs and micro-expressions on our face express much about the dynamics of conversation involvement in different moments of dialogue, but also about the fundamental attitude to the interlocutor. Nonverbal language equally betrays our mood and intentions

that sometimes would like to hide. When we make an effort of keeping a secret, the signals betraying us not a few times are small and occur for a very short period and in order to notice these, training is necessary. Those indicators that are controlled by certain areas of the brain voluntarily lose control and transmit information that even those that make them, do not know about themselves. That's why, when a person expresses an emotion in words, but nonverbally suggests us that he/she has other moods, we'll believe the nonverbal language.

The importance of nonverbal communication was proved by Albert Mehrabian (1972:229-245). After a study, he arrived at the conclusion that only 7% of the message is transmitted through verbal communication, while 38% is transmitted vocally and 55% through body language. Not all the authors share the same ideas concerning the above percentages. F.H. Giedt (1955:407-416) expressed the limits of nonverbal communication through an experiment of filming a physician-patient interview. The film was projected to some experimental groups under three circumstances: without sound; without sound, but with discussion transcription and with sound. The opinion on the patient was different, a fact that according to the author, questions the proportion above-mentioned. Septimiu Chelcea shares the same opinion (2005: 169-174):

Personally, I mention that "55-38-7 myth" should be re-examined because finally, it leads us to the question: Why should verbal language have been invented, as information is transmitted 90% through nonverbal language?

Beyond these controversies, it is clear that in the inter-human communication process, verbal language and nonverbal language work together. NLP introduces the fact that it is impossible not to communicate as an axiom, emphasizing the importance of nonverbal language in communication. It should not be excluded the fact that certain situational factors determine the persons to manage better the nonverbal reactions. We refer to social contexts in which we want to make a positive impression: a work interview, a date with a person that we are interested in etc. Also, when we consider followed, evaluated, we tend to modify our behaviour in order to increase the desirability of verbal and nonverbal answers and to wear different masks, associated to roles that sometimes we play consciously or unconsciously. The culture which we have been raised in also influences the way which we express nonverbally in. Personal distance is a fine example for this reason, it varying from a

country to another. The rules of expressing have the cultural footprint: social rules may dictate us to minimize, exaggerate, completely hide or mask an emotion. For example, watching an accident film, the Japanese tended more to hide the negative emotion with a smile (Ekman, 2009:287). There are also gestures that have different meanings from a country to another, like raised thumb that in Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand has three meanings: it is used by hitch-hikers, it means OK and when it is raised suddenly, it means an insult, while in other countries like Greece, it means something peddling (Pease, Allan, 1997:27). From this perspective, interpreting of nonverbal communication cannot be performed correctly without taking into account the cultural context which it takes place in. There are high contextual cultures that emphasize the context when communicating (like Chinese, Korean and Japanese culture) but there are also weak contextual cultures (like North-American, Australian and North-European culture). For example, looking in the interlocutor's eyes is considered a polite gesture in Western cultures, but an impolite gesture in other cultures. It is not possible taking place a successful business meeting, without taking into account these elements. We would be in delicate positions if we do not observe these, we would make subsequently hard to manage mistakes.

Some people consider that different personality factors influence the predisposition to use nonverbal language in communication. For example, introverts use the nonverbal language less than extroverts. Starting with this idea, we considered interesting to find out how much the emotional intelligence development degree influences the capacity of interpreting the nonverbal communication. For this reason, we launched the presumption that persons with high level of emotional intelligence development are more performing in interpreting the nonverbal language of interlocutors. The following instruments were applied: Inventory of emotional intelligence level developed by Robert Wood and Harry Tolley containing situational subtests of self-assessment characteristic to every feature of the emotional intelligence (Self-adjustment - 24 items; Self-awareness - 36 items; Motivation - 24 items; Empathy - 24 items; Social skills - 18 items) and a checklist for evaluation of nonverbal communication detection capacity, formed of 31 items, each having three answer variations. The checklist has 3 parts, as follows: part I- situations of nonverbal behaviour- 10 items; part II- emotions transmitted through face expressions- 13 items; part III- gesture signification- 8 items.

The instruments were applied for 120 participants, between 18-60 years old. From them, 51 (42.5%) are males and 69 (57.5%) are females. 90 (75%) participants dwell in the urban area and 30 (25%) in the rural area. 91 (75%) have university studies: 31 have graduated psychology, 28- an economical faculty, 19- law faculty and 13 have graduated polytechnics.

The obtained results - obtained correlations between components of emotional intelligence and

the capacity of interpreting the nonverbal language are presented in Table no. 1. As it can be noticed, the presumption has been confirmed. The capacity of interpreting of the nonverbal language correlates not only to total EQ score (Pearson correlation- sig = 0.000) but also to different components of the emotional intelligence, as it can be noticed in the table below.

Table no.1 Correlations between components of emotional intelligence and the capacity of interpreting nonverbal language

Correlation between main EQ components – the capacity of interpreting nonverbal language								
Figure no 1.		EQ_I self- regulation	EQ_II self- awareness	EQ_III motivation	EQ_IV empathy	EQ_V Social abilities	EQ Total amount	The capacity of interpreting the nonverbal language
The capacity of interpreting nonverbal language	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed)	.233**	.303**	.296**	.332**	-.028	.323**	1,000
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The capacity of interpreting the nonverbal language correlates to total EQ score, but also to the following components of the emotional intelligence: self-adjustment, self-awareness, motivation and empathy.

2. VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION - SEMANTIC OVERVIEW

First and foremost, one of the research stages consisted in the implementation into the “Tropes” semantic analysis program of databases extracted from the speech of Dr. Chris Shea, “The Secrets of Non Verbal Communication”¹.

In the context that guessing of the most hidden feelings of the other is another component of the emotional intelligence that is very useful if we want to be successful and the world that we dwell in can be, under certain circumstances a world of hidden interests, in which everybody promotes their interests and use words to hide thoughts and emotions, the training necessity is emphasized to decrypt the message transmitted by a person

through nonverbal and verbal language analysis, under the circumstances that there is a complementarity relation between both languages.

The control place is guessed in the verbal language, in the way we express in different contexts, presenting a series of concepts, cognitive fig., believes etc. The research was based on the introduction of a database made up of passages from the material within the software for semantic analysis "Tropes" that proposes a range of tools for semantic analysis, with which one can obtain answers to questions about the contents of text through a referential analysis. The analysis also helps create own semantic categories, customized according to the beneficiary's interest, which may include nouns, verbs, adjectives, connectors. In addition, they can be extended using software dictionaries, depending on the strategy of targeted analysis. In order to process the analyzed texts, "Tropes" facilitates the operation level, translated in the delimitation of phrases and sentences; resolving ambiguities presence (depending on the occurrence of words in the text); identification of classes of equivalent words.

The main characteristic parts of the material and the semantic division may be considered main reference points that must be included in the process of this Tropes analysis. In this case, figure no. 1, entitled „Context identification”, shows that

¹ works in non verbal strategy analysis for groups and individuals including analyses and skills training in non verbal communication, TEDx talk at TEDxMerseyside 2012 exploring the implications and uses of non verbal psychology.

the style/ the expression used is enunciative (setting some influence, revealing a point of view), the setting involves the narrator (saying about something, somebody, an action), some notions of doubt have been detected (which shows indecision, uncertainty, hesitation), the style is rather argumentative, 29 parts characteristic parts to the text (it summarizes the most characteristic part of the text) and 13 detected episodes of the analysis (which groups together word occurrences that tend to appear in a remarkable density within the limited portion of a text). To exemplify, the program highlighted that there were used phrases beginning with: “I really want...”, “I just think”, “I can be aware”, “I may experience...”, “I mean...”, that underlines the fact that the writer does not try

to impose his own views nonverbal communication and give them an absolute value, but gives the reader the possibility to integrate its interdisciplinary knowledge related to the practice of this domain.

At the same time, starting with the prerequisite that no matter how different successful people are concerning personality, they use the same strategies to obtain a result; thus, concerning the nonverbal communication, they talk efficiently to the interlocutor, make a comfortable environment for the interlocutor and use verbal and nonverbal language, using suitable comparisons and causal connectors (so, because) more than opposition connectors (but) in order to avoid possible dissonances in the communication.

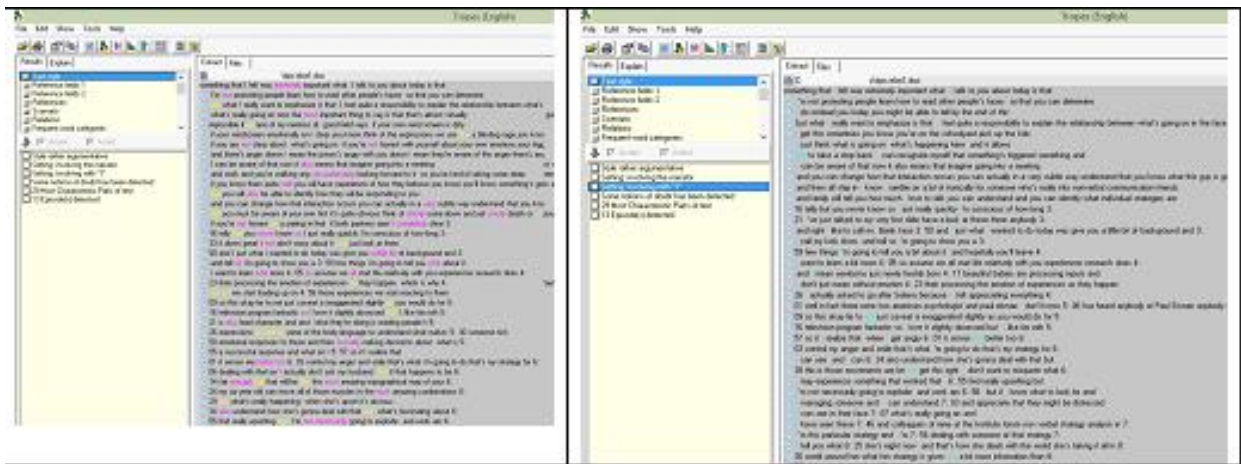


Fig.1 Identifying context

One of the representative elements characterizing the first material results, concerning contextual location, from using of action phrases. Examples can be considered static verbs like: to be, to know, to see, to think and to look.

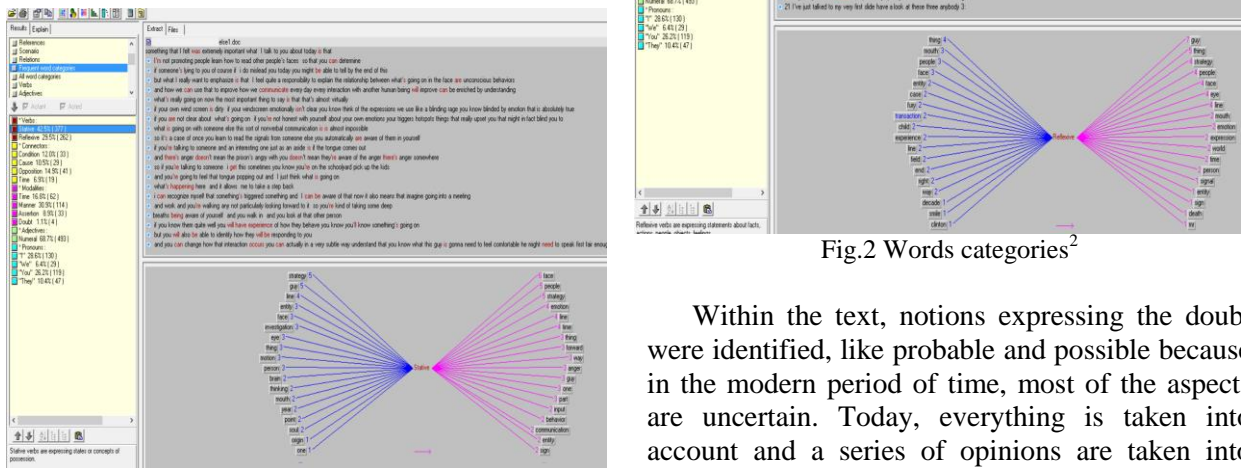


Fig.2 Words categories²

Within the text, notions expressing the doubt were identified, like probable and possible because in the modern period of time, most of the aspects are uncertain. Today, everything is taken into account and a series of opinions are taken into

² Figure obtained using the software “Tropes”

consideration, from the most plausible to the most unexpected opinions about how things may evolve concerning a certain problematic. This applies in the fields where every detail is taken into account and nothing is considered 100% certain, a series of possible opinions being taken into account- this criterion being applicable including in decryption of nonverbal language, like: training the capacity of noticing of the nonverbal language, cumulative to the verbal language, indicating us the clues about emotional moods and mentality of the respective person; training the capacity of having a real conversation, which we do not make suppositions in (that can be only simple projections, hence the importance of personal development/analysis in the process of training as a therapist) that can be proved to be wrong.

3. CONCLUSIONS

In order to analyze verbal and nonverbal language of a person, we deal with authentic indicators showing what really happens in the people eyes, but also masked indicators, pretending to be something else than they really are (for example, we wipe our eyes seeming that we want to remove dust from them, but in fact it can be a sadness indicator). One of the behaviour indicators along time tend to amplify, while others tend to subdue. Concerning problems of dominance and court, where there is an excessive competition of persons, the features signifying the reproductive power and force tend to emphasize, determining substantial and easily remarkable manifestations.

It is ideal to value our resources at maximum and to manage efficiently minuses or vulnerabilities. Emotional intelligence with everything belonging to it presents the advantage that it can develop much through education, personal effort and perseverance.

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