

The determinants of linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of emotional utterances

The aim of this study was to describe the patterns of linguistic and paralinguistic expression of affective narrations with various valences and to uncover their mechanisms (mainly the psychological ones). An effort has been made to answer the following questions: (1) Which demographical variables (gender and age) differentiate the pattern of paralinguistic and linguistic emotional expression and in what way; (2) What are the differences between the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of affective narrations with a different valence (positive and negative), if any; (3) Do the psychological variables (personality, temperamental, affective and cognitive) explain the pattern of linguistic and paralinguistic expression of affective narrations and how do they do that. Along with the personality and temperamental variables, which meaning has already been proved in other related thematically studies, the emotional and verbal intelligence has been taken into consideration, that have not been used in such configuration. The needs of synthesis and extending of past data and transferring them into Polish reality have been observed.

The individual examinations have been conducted (preceded by pilotage). 150 persons selected from the general population have taken part in the research, who were native Polish speakers with the verbal intelligence at least at an indifferent level. People having neuropsychiatric or speech disorders have been excluded from the study. The research sample was diversified in terms of the gender, age and educational background. The study was conducted in two steps. The first step included the interview, screening procedure taking into account demographic data and measurements of linguistic and paralinguistic utterance aspects. The narrative methods have been used. The examined persons have been asked to tell two stories: the first one related to the anxiety, the second one related to the contentment. The utterances have been recorded, transcribed and analysed according to the author's narration analysis model that takes under consideration the following indicators: the negative valence, the positive valence, dogmatism, self-focusing, negation, mental processes, intensity, engagement, differentiation, emotionality, paralinguistic, speaking fluency. The second step was a measurement of the psychological variables, conducted with use of the short form of NEO-PI-R (SF IPIP NEO-PI-R), FCZ-KT(R), PKIE, TRE and STAI questionnaires. For the results analysis the following tools have been used: independent t test, one-way analysis of variance ANOVA, two-factor analysis of variance, multivariate regression analysis, exploratory factor analysis and structural equations modeling.

In the examined persons' utterances the statistically significant cross-gender differences in terms of the positive and negative valence, emotionality and dogmatism indicators have revealed. Such kind of terms is more often being used by women in the utterances related to emotions. As the age increases, the usage frequency of positive emotional terms in utterances about the positive emotion increases, and the number of references to one's own person decreases. The study has also brought interesting conclusions on age and gender interaction related to the usage of positive and negative emotional terms, dogmatic terms and negation.

The conducted researches have confirmed the otherness between narrations related to emotions with a different valence. The utterances about anxiety tend to have more negative emotional terms, higher number of negations, terms indicating on making distinctions and in case of men, also a higher number of terms describing the flow of mental processes. The utterances about contentment turned out to contain more interjections and emotional terms, especially the positive ones. In the group of women the narrations also tended to contain more terms describing the intensity.

The research shows that the projection of the psychological properties of the subject takes place in the language expression. In particular, emotional tension is revealed (especially in the form of anxiety), high emotional intelligence (especially in the field of emotions knowledge), temperamental factors such as sensitivity, emotional reactivity and attitude towards other people.

The psychological mechanisms of linguistic and paralinguistic expression are complex. Accordingly to the presented model of projection-expression, the expression can reveal different traits of the subject. The way of receiving and analyzing the information gathered from the surrounding is dependent on the owned cognitive schemes and used defense mechanisms, what can be more or less conscious and adaptive. A different construction of meanings (as a result of a different interpretation of the experience) leads to the construction of concepts with a diverse structure, what can modify the way people speak about their specific emotions.

The study creates a new contribution to the knowledge of linguistic and para-linguistic emotional expression and their psychological mechanisms. A theoretical framework that integrates elements previously considered separately within different disciplines and theoretical approaches has been presented, which enabled a holistic view over the mechanism of linguistic and para-linguistic expression of the psychic properties of man. Moreover, a synthesis of existing data and its extension by the new elements have been made.

Miscellaneous expression determinants and its manifestations have been taken into consideration, in opposite to current state of the art (the researchers focused mainly on single expression manifestations or on a narrow range of its determinants). Thanks to this approach it was possible to reveal the complexity of psychological expression mechanisms and to understand better this process. This is the first such a complex research conducted in Polish environment among people from the general population.

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